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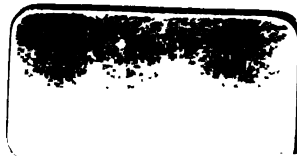
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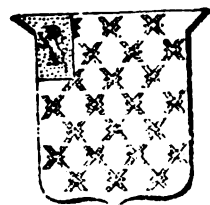
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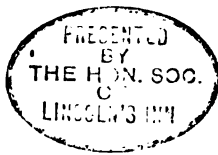
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BY
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THE AMERICAN LAW OF EASEMENTS AND SERVITUDES.

VOLUME III.

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CONTENTS.

Volume III. begins with TITLE at page 398 of Volume II. second edition.

BOOK III.

ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER OF ESTATES.

CHAPTER I.

TITLE BY DESCENT.



SECTION I.

	PAGE
Title generally considered	1

SECTION II.

Title by descent	5
Statute rules of descent	21

CHAPTER II.

TITLE OTHER THAN BY GRANT.

SECTION I.

Escheat	46
-------------------	----

SECTION II.

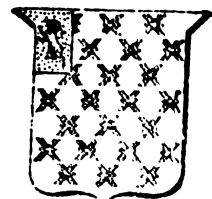
Occupancy	50
---------------------	----

SECTION III.

Prescription and limitation	51
---------------------------------------	----



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OF
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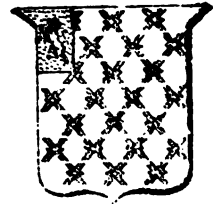
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LAW OF REAL PROPERTY.

BOOK III.

ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER OF ESTATES.

CHAPTER I.

TITLE—DESCENT.

*SECTION I.

[*398]

TITLE GENERALLY CONSIDERED.

1. Title defined.
2. The different stages of title.
3. All title by descent or purchase.
4. Title by act of law and of parties.

1. HAVING treated of estates with their qualities and incidents, both as to corporeal and incorporeal hereditaments, it now becomes proper, in pursuing the objects of this treatise, to consider the subject of the *titles* by which these estates are acquired and held, with a view, in the end, to speak of the modes of transmitting such estates by law, from one person to another. It would, obviously, be of little importance, beyond embodying certain speculative and abstract notions in respect to the forms which property may assume, to define and illustrate the nature and qualities of estates, if law did not go further, and determine by what rule the ownership of such property, or what is commonly called the *title*, may be acquired, held, or parted with, by individuals. It is to this part of the general subject that the attention of the reader is now to be directed. It is somewhat difficult to define, in brief terms, precisely what is

meant by title. But it may perhaps, be sufficiently accurate to *adopt the words of Lord Coke, who defines it as "*justa causa possidendi quod nostrum est*, and

signifieth the means whereby a man cometh to land. *Et dicitur titulus a tuendo*, because by it he holdeth and defendeth the land.”¹ Mr. Burton says: “Every title must rest ultimately upon mere possession.” Lord Kaimes, while treating of the history of property, says: “It is taught by all writers that occupation is an essential solemnity in the original establishment of land property.” “But so soon as property came to be considered as a right, independent of possession, it was natural to relax from the solemnities formerly requisite to transfer land property.”² And, after all the speculations in which these writers have indulged upon the origin of individual property in any portion of what must once have been a common heritage, it seems, upon their hypothesis, to resolve itself back to possession as its element, but to have derived from an enjoyment, sufficiently continued, an abstract notion of ownership, to which the word *property* is applied, which becomes susceptible of being transmitted to others, by being accompanied by a symbolic, rather than an actual, formal transfer of possession.*

2. Blackstone divides title to lands, considered in its progressive development, into several stages, namely, [*400] naked possession, *right of possession, right of property without possession, and right of property united with the right of possession.³ This idea of Judge Blackstone, which has been adopted by Mr. Cruise and other writers, is

* NOTE.—Mr. Maine, in his recent learned and ingenious essay upon “Ancient Law,” combats the notion of Blackstone and other writers upon the subject, that property in a thing must have been originally derived from occupancy. “I venture,” says he “to state my opinion, that the popular impression in reference to the part played by occupancy in the first stages of civilization, directly reverses the truth.” “It is only when the rights of property have gained a sanction from long practical inviolability, and when the vast majority of the objects of enjoyment have been subjected to private ownership, that mere possession is allowed to invest the first possessor with dominion over commodities in which no prior proprietorship has been asserted,” p. 256. The whole discussion upon the subject, of which the above is but a single thought, will repay the reader who may study the eighth chapter of his work with attention.

¹ Co. Lit. 345 b.

² Burt. Real Prop. § 418; Kaimes, Law Tracts, 98.

³ 2 Bl. Com. 195-199.

illustrated by an act of disseisin, followed by possession by the disseisor. If a disseisor enters upon the land of another, and evicts or turns the true owner out of possession thereof, although, in one sense, as between him and the true owner, he has no right or title whatever to the land, yet, as to all the world but him, the possession so gained, gives him complete dominion over, and right to the land, and constitutes, in the eye of the law, a *prima facie* title thereto. In the mean time, however, the one who has been wrongfully evicted has a right to the possession which the disseisor has usurped and retains, so that here is a naked possession in one, and a right to the immediate possession in another. In every State, where the common law prevails, possession of lands, for a period of time sufficiently long, is held to divest the owner thereof of his right to regain his possession by his own act, without the aid of legal process. If, therefore, in the case supposed, this possession shall have been continued by the disseisor for the requisite length of time, nothing will remain in the original owner but a right of property, while the possession and right of possession, will have become united in the disseisor. It only remains, then, for the right of property to become united with the possession, and right of possession, to perfect the disseisor's title. And here, again, for the sake of quieting titles, there is, in every State, a period beyond which no man may enforce his naked right of property, after he shall have lost his right of possession, and if, in the case supposed, he suffers the disseisor to retain the possession beyond this prescribed period of time, no one can call in question the right of property as well as of possession of the latter, and he thereby becomes clothed with a complete title to the land, or, as Lord Coke says, it was anciently called, *jus duplicatum, droit droit*.¹

*Judge Walker, in his introduction to the American [*401] law, disposes of this question in these words: "Such refinements serve to perplex, rather than inform the mind. The truth is, title means the same thing as ownership. A man may be in possession of a thing which he does not own, and he may own a thing of which he is not in possession." "It

¹ 2 BL Com. 195-199; Co. Lit. 266 a; 3 Cruise, Dig. 312-315; 4 Kent, Com. 373; Güterbock, Bracton by Coxe, 100; Reeves' Hist. 4th ed. 234.

would seem, therefore, that the perfection of title consists in the union of possession with the right of possession, for when these meet in the same person, he cannot be rightfully dispossessed. In other words, he is the lawful owner of the property, and this is the whole of the matter."¹

3. In one thing all writers agree, and that is, in considering that there are two modes only, regarded as classes, of acquiring a title to land, namely, descent and purchase; purchase including every mode of acquisition known to the law, except that by which an heir, on the death of an ancestor, becomes substituted in his place as owner, by the act of the law.²

4. Some writers make a distinction, in respect to estates acquired by purchase, between titles created by act of the law, and those by act of the parties, estates by escheat being an example of the first class. Others still incline to regard estates in dower and by curtesy as properly coming within the doctrine of descent.³

¹ Walk. Am. Law, 317.

² 2 Bl. Com. 241; *James v. Morey*, 2 Cow. 290; Co. Lit. 18 b.

³ 3 Cruise, Dig. 317; 2 Flint. Real Prop. 446; Co. Lit. 18 b, note 106; 4 Kent, Com. 373, note.

SECTION II.

TITLE BY DESCENT.

1. Title by descent defined.
2. *Heir* created only by law.
3. Title by heirship, not till ancestor's death.
4. Heir's title is independent of his own act.
- 5-7. Origin and changes in English law of descent.
8. Hale's canons of descent.
9. All rules of descent arbitrary and artificial.
10. Feudal rules never adopted here.
11. Rules of construction as to descent.
12. Rules for computing degrees of kindred.
- 13-19. English canons of descent.
20. What is accounted as "lands."
21. American law of descent traced to the civil law.
- 22, 23. How civil law differs from American and English law.
24. Seisin necessary to create one a *stirps*.
25. Common law as to seisin of reversions, &c.
26. Statutes here affecting descents of reversions, &c.
27. Statutes here as to ascending and collateral inheritance.
28. Inheritance by those of half-blood.
29. Who is of the blood of him who was last seised, &c.
30. Posthumous children as heirs.
31. Illegitimate children when heirs.
32. *Lex loci* regulates descent of land.
33. Of descent from aliens.
34. When child is heir in place of father.
35. Heir disinherited only by express devise.
36. Title by descent prior to that by devise.
37. Title of ancestor vests at once in his heir.
38. What to be proved to show collateral descent.
39. What is embraced under "ancestor."
40. Effect of omission of child's name in a will.
41. Marshalling assets in paying ancestor's debts.
42. What interests in lands are descendible.
43. Rents descendible.
44. Of advancement.

NOTE.—Statute Rules of Descent.

1. In what is said of the subject in the following pages, the ordinary division of titles into those by descent and those by

[397]

purchase, will be observed. And first of descent. [*402] "Property of *lands by descent is," says Lord Bacon, "where a man hath lands of inheritance, and dieth, not disposing of them, but leaving it to go (as the law casteth it) upon the heir. This is called a descent of law."¹

2. The *heir*, as the term is here used, is always appointed by the law; for all persons appointed by a tenant in fee-simple as his successors, are technically not heirs, but assigns, whether the appointment be by deed or by will, in which respect the common differs from the civil law, it being a maxim of the feudal law, that *solus Deus potest facere hæredem, non homo*.²

3. The title of an heir is called into existence by the *death* of the ancestor, for *nemo est hæres viventis*, although, in popular phrase, certain persons are regarded as the heirs of persons still alive, under the names of heirs apparent, and heirs presumptive. Thus, an heir presumptive, is a person who, if the ancestor were then to die, would be his heir; as, for instance, in England, a daughter, if an only child, would be heir presumptive of her father. But if he were, subsequently, to have a son, she would cease to be such heir. An heir apparent, is one who is certain to be the heir of an ancestor if he survive him, as is the case in England with the oldest son, since, by the canons of descent there, he is sure to be his father's heir, if he outlives him.³

4. An heir at law, is the only person who, by the common law, becomes the owner of land without his own agency or assent. A title by deed or devise requires the assent of the grantee or devisee before it can take effect. But in the case of descent, the law casts the title upon the heir, without any regard to his wishes or election. He cannot disclaim it, if he would.⁴ Where an heir takes undevise property he never takes it by act or intention of the testator. His right is paramount to and independent of the will.⁵ An heir is entitled to rents of undevise lands until sold for the payment of debts, even though the ancestor die insolvent.⁶ And where a railroad was

¹ Bac. Law Tracts, 128.

² Co. Lit. 191 a, note 77, § v. i.

³ 2 Bl. Com. 208.

⁴ Wms. Real Prop. 75; 2 Bl. Com. 201.

⁵ *Augustus v. Seabok*, 3 Met. (Ky.) 161.

⁶ *Loddell v. Hayes*, 12 Gray, 238; *Gibson v. Farley*, 16 Mass. 280; *Newcomb v. Stebbins*, 9 Met. 540.

laid across the land of an ancestor after his decease, his heir was held entitled to the damages though the land was subsequently sold for payment of debts.¹

5. In tracing the history of the law of descent of lands in a former part of this work,² it was stated that "children, at *first, succeeded to a feud in the place of the father, [*403] and grandchildren in the place of children." In a treatise called "The Laws of Hen. I.," the doctrine of excluding females is promulgated; and, it is declared, that the capital fief should go to the oldest son. And this is said to have been the first notice of the English doctrine of primogeniture, in the law of descent.³ The rest of the ancestor's lands were to the younger son or sons.⁴

6. In the time of Henry II., however, the oldest son had become sole heir to all lands held by military tenure, nor could his right be defeated by an alienation of the ancestor, though socage lands, unless there was some custom to the contrary, descended to sons equally. If the ancestor left no sons, both military and socage lands descended to daughters in equal shares, the oldest having the capital messuage, upon making compensation to the other daughters, but all taking as coparceners.⁵

7. In the time of Henry III., or soon after, both socage and military lands descended according to the rules of *primogeniture*.⁶ But it is not known when collaterals first took in succession, though the usage prevailed in the time of Henry II., that brothers and sisters should take if there were no lineal descendants; or, if they were dead, their children were to take in their stead. After these, the uncles and their children came in, and last, aunts and their children, — the males always being preferred to females.⁷ The approach to this system of rules, however, was gradual and by degrees only, though it is diffi-

¹ *Boynton v. Peterborough, &c.* R. R. 4 Cush. 467.

² *Ante*, vol. 1, p. *67.

³ 1 Spence, Eq. Jur. 175.

⁴ Reeve, Hist. Eng. Law, 30, 1st ed.

⁵ Reeve, Hist. Eng. Law, 30; 1 Spence, Eq. Jur. 176; Dalrymp. Feud. Ten. 205.

⁶ 1 Spence, Eq. Jur. 176.

⁷ Reeve, Hist. Eng. Law, 32.

cult to trace the stages of the progress.¹ In the time of Henry III. the rule *jus descendit ad primogenitum* was established, and all descendants, *in infinitum*, from any person who would have been heir if living, inherited *jure representationis*. [*404] Thus, *the oldest son dying in the lifetime of the father, and leaving issue, that issue was to be preferred in inheritancy to the grandfather before any younger brother of the father.² The father, it will be perceived, or any lineal ancestor, was never allowed to succeed as heir to a descendant, or, as Bracton says, "*nunquam reascendit ea via qua descendit, post-mortem antecessorum.*"³

8. Lord C. J. Hale, is said to have reduced the rules of descent to a series of canons, although these rules had then been in use for four hundred years; and no change was made in them until the act of 3 and 4 Wm. IV. ch. 106, in 1833.⁴

9. It is hardly necessary to add, that whatever may be the rules of descent of property in any country, they must, of necessity, be more or less arbitrary and artificial, "the creatures of the civil polity and *juris positivi* merely," to quote the language of Blackstone. What these rules shall be, must, therefore, in the nature of things, depend upon the condition and genius of the people among whom they prevail; and it could not be expected that the systems which different nations may have respectively adopted, will be found to be in all respects the same.

10. It would accordingly be found, that the system of rules developed under the feudal notions of the Middle Ages, though maintained for so many ages in the mother country, were not in accordance with the genius and condition of her Colonies in this country; and that, at an early period in their history, important departures from these canons were made in the progress of their legislation. Massachusetts, in 1641, divided estates equally among children, except giving the oldest son a double share. When these Colonies became States, each had its own system of rules for the government of property within

¹ Dalrymp. Feud. Ten. 216 - 221.

² Reeve, Hist. Eng. Law, 227; Bract. Lib. 2, pp. 64, 65.

³ 2 Bl. Com. 211; Bract. Lib. 2, p. 62.

⁴ Wms. Real Prop. 76.

its limits, some of them varying essentially from those of the others, and all from the English common law. And these changes were followed in the end by that of England, in 1833, already mentioned, which introduced material modifications in the ancient canons, and rendered the system in many *particulars more conformable to the prevailing spirit [*405] of legislation upon the subject in this country. Under these circumstances, it would obviously be loading these pages with useless and obsolete learning, to give in detail the former system of legal rules upon this subject which prevailed in England. And yet, in order that the reader may be able to understand enough of this system to apply the propositions and illustrations so often made by courts and legal writers when treating of kindred topics, and, at the same time, to see to what point the law has been carried by the changes which the recent legislation of England, and of the several United States, has effected in this respect, it seems necessary to state as briefly as may be, the early canons of the English law of descent, together with the substance of the existing laws of these States upon the same subject, and such a reference to decided cases as may aid the reader to understand and apply the rules of law which may be found at present to prevail.

11. Before doing this, it seems proper to call the reader's attention to certain familiar rules of construction which are of constant reference in construing and applying the provisions of these several systems, and all of which have their origin in the common law. And first, as to lineal and collateral descent, and the modes of computing the degrees of affinity between two persons related to each other, which have been applied under these various systems.

Consanguinity, or kindred by blood relationship, is the connection or relation of persons descended from the same stock or common ancestor. This common ancestor, to whom reference is made in computing the degrees of affinity to determine the nearness or remoteness of relationship of different persons akin to each other, is commonly spoken of as the *stirps* or *root*, sometimes the *stipes*, the trunk or common stock from which the line or lines of descent are traced. This consanguinity is either lineal or collateral. It is lineal when it exists between

persons descended in a direct line one from the other, as father, grandfather, and the like, in an ascending line, and son, grandson, and the like, in the descending line. It is collateral, when they are descended from a common *stirps* or stock, [*406] but not one *from the other. Thus, a man and his nephew are collaterally related, as each may trace his line of descent to the same common ancestor, the father of the one being also grandfather of the other. And at the distance of twenty generations, as illustrated by Blackstone, a man has above a million of ancestors, while if one's ancestors had left upon an average two children apiece, and each of those children two, and so on through fifteen generations, every man would have, of collateral kindred now subsisting in the fifteenth degree, almost two hundred and seventy millions.¹

12. By the canon and common law, which concur in this respect, the degrees of kindred between two persons are reckoned by counting from a common ancestor to the most remote descendant of the two from him. The relation of two brothers is in the first degree, because there is but one step from their father to either of them. But the relation of uncle and nephew is in the second degree, there being two degrees from the nephew to his grandfather, the father of the uncle. By the civil law, which is, in this respect, generally adopted in this country,² these degrees are computed by adding together the number of degrees there are between each of the two persons whose relationship is to be ascertained, and the common ancestor. Thus, the relation between brothers is in the second degree, each being one degree removed from the father. But between uncle and nephew, it is the third, and between cousins, the fourth degree of kindred.³

13. The first of the English canons of descent was, that the inheritance should lineally descend to the issue of the person who *last died actually seised, in infinitum*, but never lineally ascend. The seisin here meant must have been an actual, or what was equivalent to an actual, corporeal seisin.⁴ The English law is now so changed, that the heir must be of the last person entitled to the estate as a purchaser. So that,

¹ 2 Bl. Com. 202, 206.

² *McDowell v. Addams*, 45 Penn. St. 430.

³ 2 Bl. Com. 206, 207.

⁴ 2 Bl. Com. 208, 209.

if *one has an estate as heir from one who purchased [*407] it, and dies, his heir does not inherit the estate unless he is also heir to the purchaser from whom his immediate ancestor inherited.¹ If there is a failure of lineal descendants of the last purchaser entitled to the estate, it goes to the nearest lineal ancestor, the father, and all paternal ancestors and their descendants, being preferred before females.²

14. The second canon is still the English law, that male issue are admitted as heirs before females.³

15. The third canon provides, that where there are several males kindred in equal degree, the oldest is the heir. But if there are several females, they all, together, constitute what is called the heir. And this rule remains unchanged.⁴

16. By the fourth canon, the lineal descendants *in infinitum* of any person deceased, represent the ancestor, that is, stand in the same place as the ancestor would himself have done had he been living. This taking by representation is called a succession *per stirpes*, or, according to the roots, all the branches of each root taking the share which the root it represents would have taken, and is used in distinction from taking *per capita*, where each takes as next of kin to the deceased in his own direct right.⁵

17. Under the fifth canon, upon failure of lineal descendants or issue of the person last seised, the inheritance descends to his collateral relations of the blood of the first purchaser, subject to the three last previous rules. This is now altered so that the estate passes to lineal ancestors, if any, in preference to collateral kindred.⁶

18. By the sixth canon, the heir in the collateral line of the person last seised, must be his next collateral kinsman of the *whole blood. By kinsman of the whole blood [*408] is meant one who has descended not only from the same ancestor, but from the same couple of ancestors. If two

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 78-80.

² Wms. Real Prop. 83, 85. Mr. Coleridge, in his note to 2 Bl. Com. 211, says, in the case above supposed, "the inheritance is equally divided between the two ascending lines."

³ 2 Bl. Com. 213.

⁴ 2 Bl. Com. 214.

⁵ 2 Bl. Com. 217, 218.

⁶ 2 Bl. Com. 220; Wms. Real Prop. 83.

are descended from the same father, but have different mothers, or from the same mother by different fathers, they will be as of the half-blood to each other. And by the application of this canon, a sister of the whole blood of one who is deceased, is preferred to a brother of the half-blood, under the maxim that *possessio fratris facit sororem esse hæredem*.¹ This canon is now altered so that a kinsman of half-blood is made capable of being heir, and to inherit next after a kinsman in the same degree, of the whole blood.²

19. The seventh canon respects collateral inheritances, and prefers male stocks to female, unless the lands shall have actually descended from the female. This means, that kindred derived from the blood of the male ancestor, however remote, shall be admitted before those from the blood of the female, however near, with the exception above stated; the relations on the father's side being admitted, *in infinitum*, before those of the mother's side are admitted at all.³

20. The word *land*, as used in the present English statute of descent, to denote that to which a person must be entitled in order to be a purchaser, and, therefore, an ancestor from whom a descent might be traced, embraces all estates, possibilities, rights, titles, and interests in all lands, whether in possession, reversion, remainder, or contingency. Nor is it necessary, in order to make one entitled to land, that he should have obtained possession, or the rents and profits thereof.⁴

21. When the rules of descent in this country are examined, it will be found that the American law has borrowed much more from the civil than the common law in respect to the distribution of estates. The one hundred and eighteenth Novel of Justinian has a striking resemblance to the American [*409] can law, in *giving the succession of estates to all legitimate children without distinction, and disregarding all considerations of primogeniture.⁵

22. There is one particular in which the American law differs from that of Justinian, that, while generally in this country, lineal descendants, if they stand in an equal degree from

¹ 2 Bl. Com. 224, 227.

² Wms. Real Prop. 86.

³ 2 Bl. Com. 234.

⁴ Burt. Real Prop. § 301, note.

⁵ Coop. Justin. 543; 4 Kent, Com. 378.

the common ancestor, share equally *per capita*; under the Roman law, regard was had to the right of representation, each lineal branch of descendants taking only the portion which their parent would have taken, had he been living, the division being *per stirpes* and not *per capita*.¹ But it will be found that in some of the United States the rule of the Roman law in this respect has been adopted and retained. Among them are Rhode Island, New Jersey, North and South Carolina, Alabama, and Louisiana.²

23. In one marked respect, the Roman was unlike either the English or American law, since by that, one was an heir who took by will as much as he who took by descent, and by a fiction, was, in all respects, the person whom he represented.³

24. By the English law, no one could be a *stirps* from whom a descent could be derived, unless he had been actually seised. The possession of a tenant for years was, however, deemed to be the possession of him who was entitled to the freehold, whether a reversioner or a remainder-man.⁴ And the seisin or possession of one tenant in common or coparcener, is a seisin or possession of all.⁵

25. As there can be no actual seisin and possession of a remainder or reversion dependent upon a particular estate of freehold, although the same will descend through a line of successive heirs until the estate vests in some one in possession, the rule of the common law seems to be this: if such remainder *or reversion comes by descent from the [*410] donor of the particular estate who created the same, the person who claims it when it vests in possession, must trace his descent from the donor who was last actually seised, irrespective of all who, in the mean time, may have been entitled to the same as heirs, the donor or creator of the particular estate being the *stirps* from which the descent of the one who is to take, is to be traced. But it would have been competent for any one to whom such right had descended, to have sold or devised it, whereby the grantee or devisee as purchaser would have constituted a new *stirps*, and he would take the

¹ Coop. Justin. 544; 4 Kent, Com. 379, 391, 408.

² 4 Kent, Com. 391.

³ Co. Lit. 15 a.

⁴ Co. Lit. a, Butler's note 77, §§ 2, 3.

⁵ 4 Kent, Com. 386.

estate when it vested in possession, who could trace the descent to himself from such new *stirps*. And the same would be the effect, if the donor of the particular estate or the remainderman subject to it, had himself conveyed or devised the reversion or remainder.¹

26. But the law, in this respect, is changed in several if not all of the United States, and the heirs of a reversioner or remainderman take as absolutely as if their ancestor were actually seised as of a freehold in possession; the word "seised," when applied to such an interest, being equivalent to owning, and "seisin," to ownership. A remainderman or reversioner, therefore, becomes a proper stock of descent, and the remainder or reversion of one dying intestate, is to be distributed among his heirs in the same manner as estates in possession. The heir here takes all the real estate *owned* by the ancestor at the time of his death, and the maxim of the common law, that *seisina facit stipitem, non jus*, is practically abolished, it is believed, in the States mentioned below, if not in all the States in this country.²

[*411] *27. By referring to the statutes, an abstract of which is given at the close of this chapter, it will appear that an estate of inheritance pretty uniformly ascends to lineal ancestors where lineal descendants fail, they being preferred to collateral branches. Thus in New Hampshire, a maternal grandmother rather than a paternal uncle is heir to a person dying under age, leaving neither father, brother, sister, nor mother.³ But the law is less uniform in respect to collateral heirs, and the degrees beyond which such heirs may not claim to inherit by right of representation. In some States, the rule will be found to exclude all beyond the children of

¹ Cook v. Hammond, 4 Mason, 484; Miller v. Miller, 10 Met. 393; 4 Kent, Com. 385; ante, pp. *391, *392; Vanderheyden v. Crandall, 2 Denio, 9; 4 Kent, Com. 386, 387.

² Cook v. Hammond, 4 Mason, 484; Miller v. Miller, 10 Met. 393, 401; Russell v. Hoar, 3 Met. 187; Whitney v. Whitney, 14 Mass. 88; Vanderheyden v. Crandall, 2 Denio, 9; Moore v. Rake, 2 Dutch. 574; Hillhouse v. Chester, 3 Day, 166. So in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Delaware, South Carolina, Georgia, and Ohio. 4 Kent, Com. 388; Walk. Am. Law, 333; Hartley v. The State, 3 Ga. 238. But see Chirac v. Reinecker, 2 Pet. 625, as to the law of Maryland. See also Lawrence v. Pitt, 1 Jones (N. C.), 344.

³ Kelsey v. Hardy, 20 N. H. 479.

brothers and sisters. In others, the right extends to their grandchildren. Thus, for instance, in Maine, if an intestate have no issue, nor father nor mother, the right of representation does not extend beyond a brother's and sister's children.¹ In Maryland, an intestate left uncles and aunts, and children of a deceased uncle. But the latter were excluded as heirs, as the right of representation extended no further than to uncles and aunts.²

28. There will also be found a great difference in the laws of the several States, in respect to inheritance by those of the whole and half blood. In some States, no distinction is made between the whole and half blood, though, in a majority of them, a distinction more or less extensive exists in that respect, by which the half-blood are postponed, but in none are they wholly excluded. In another respect the laws of the several States essentially differ, namely, as to inheritances which come to the ancestor by descent and are called ancestral, by contrast with those which are acquired by him by purchase. In several of the States, these descend to the kindred who are of the blood of the ancestor from whom the inheritance comes, whether in the paternal or maternal line, excluding the relations in the opposite line until the first shall have been exhausted. And in tracing out this ancestral line, it always stops at the last purchaser. The one hundred and eighteenth Novel of Justinian, *changed the Roman law so as to restrict [*412] the half-blood from inheriting only in case of failure of the whole blood. While before that time no difference between them had been recognized.³ In New Jersey, it has been held, that brothers and sisters of the half-blood on the mother's side of A who had died intestate, inherit with a sister of the half-blood on the father's side, lands acquired by the deceased by deed of gift, from the father of the intestate.⁴ Half-blood inherit equally with those of the whole blood in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Maryland, where they are in the line of inheritance.⁵ Brothers and sisters of the half-blood, under the pro-

¹ *Quinby v. Higgins*, 14 Me. 309.

² *Levering v. Heighe*, 2 Md. Ch. Dec. 81; *Ellicott v. Ellicott*, Id. 468.

³ *Coop. Justin.* 545; 4 *Kent, Com.* 406.

⁴ *Arnold v. Den*, 2 Soath. 362.

⁵ *Doe v. Sheppard*, 3 *Murph.* 333; *Doe v. Turner*, 2 *Hawks*, 435; *Nichol v.*

vincial statutes of Massachusetts, were heirs to each other, on failure of issue if the father was dead. And in applying this law it was held, that where A died, leaving a wife and one child, and the child died under age without issue, his estate descended to his mother and her other children by a former husband.¹ In Pennsylvania, a brother or sister of the whole blood of the deceased is preferred to one of the half-blood. But where an intestate dies, leaving lands which he inherited from his father, and his heirs on his father's side are uncles and aunts, they take without distinction of blood.²

29. When reference is made, in the language of a statute, regulating descent to such as are of the blood of the person from whom the estate came, a father is accounted to be of the blood of his daughter.³

30. Posthumous children inherit in the same manner as if they had been born in the lifetime of the father, and were surviving heirs; and this doctrine is universally adopted in the United States.⁴ And this relates back to the conception of the child, if it is born alive.⁵

[*413] *31. By the common law, illegitimate children can neither be heirs to any one, nor ancestors to any one, except their own issue, for purposes of descent. But the laws of many of the States will be found to have modified this rule, especially as between mothers and their illegitimate children, making them heirs to each other.⁶

32. It should be borne in mind, that the *lex loci rei sitæ* regulates the descent of lands irrespective of the domicile of the person of the intestate, or the claimants as heirs.⁷ And those laws must be the same which are in force at the death of the

Dupree, 7 Yerg. 415; Lowe v. Maccubben, 1 Harr. & J. 550; Osborne v. Widenhouse, 3 Jones (N. C.), Eq. 238.

¹ Sheffield v. Lovering, 12 Mass. 490.

² Danner v. Shissler, 31 Penn. St. 289.

³ Cole v. Batley, 2 Curt. C. C. 562.

⁴ 4 Kent, Com. 412; Den v. Flora, 8 Ired. 374; Morrow v. Scott, 7 Ga. 535.

⁵ Harper v. Archer, 4 Smedes & M. 99.

⁶ Wms. Real Prop. 102, 103, and Rawle's note. The common law prevails in the States of South Carolina, New Jersey, and Delaware, but in none other, in this respect.

⁷ Story, Conf. Laws, § 484; Potter v. Titcomb, 22 Me. 300; Jones v. Marable, 6 Humph. 116; Smith v. Kelley, 23 Miss. 167.

ancestor, the rights of heirs being considered as arising at that time.¹

33. Where an alien is, by law, authorized to hold real estate, it will descend as that of a citizen to whoever is his lawful heir, if he has any, and will not escheat; and where one was authorized by special statute to hold lands, and he died intestate, leaving a father an alien, a brother authorized to hold land, and other brothers aliens, it was held, that his estate descended directly to his brother, who had capacity to take lands, as his heir.²

34. In some of the United States, the issue of a deceased child take the share of their parent, in the estate of the parent of their parent. But in these cases it is necessary that the child, their parent, should have died in the lifetime of their grandparent, in order to have his issue become heirs of their grandparent by way of representation. Where, therefore, there was a devise of an estate first to A B for life, who was a son and one of the heirs of the testator, remainder to the legal heirs of the testator, it was held that if the remainder was a vested one, A B might convey his share of it in his lifetime, and so cut off *his heirs from any part of it. If the re- [*414] mainder did not vest till the decease of A B, still his children could not take as heirs of the testator; for to constitute them such heirs, their father, A B, must have died in the testator's lifetime; and in this case they were not born till after the testator's death, by which, of course, the father must have survived the testator.³

35. An heir at law cannot be disinherited except by express devise, or a necessary implication in a will. No wish, however strong, expressed in a will that the heir should not inherit, will have any effect, unless the testator actually devise the same estate to some other person.⁴

36. And, independent of legislation, as a title by descent is deemed by law to be worthier than that by devise, if an ancestor devises to his heir just the estate in quantity and quality

¹ *Marshall v. King*, 24 Miss. 85; *McGaughey v. Henry*, 15 B. Mon. 383; *Miller v. Miller*, 10 Met. 393, 401.

² *Parish v. Ward*, 28 Barb. 328.

³ *Brown v. Lawrence*, 3 Cush. 390 - 399.

⁴ *Doe v. Lasius*, 8 Ind. 441; *McIntire v. Cross*, Id. 444.

which he would take by descent, the latter will be considered as holding by descent and not by devise.¹ But if one devises an estate to his wife, she will take as a purchaser, and not by descent.²

37. Upon the death of an ancestor, the real estate he may leave undevise vests at once in his heir, subject to be divested if required for the payment of the intestate's debts.³ And if the estate of the deceased was a fee, the law presumes that it descended to the heirs at law of the deceased, unless a devise thereof is affirmatively shown.⁴ And in trying the title of an heir, it is not necessary for him to show that his ancestor died intestate. The intestacy is presumed till the contrary is proved.⁵

38. To prove heirship in a collateral line, a party must show the descent of himself and of the person last seised, from some common ancestor, and the exhaustion of all the lines of descent which would have a right to claim before him.⁶

39. The term "ancestor," as used in a statute of descents, *means any one from whom the estate is inherited. In this sense an infant brother may be the ancestor of an adult brother, the former having died, and his estate having come to the latter as his heir.⁷ A question arose in Massachusetts, under the provision whereby, in certain cases, grandfathers and grandmothers are heirs of an intestate, in a case where the deceased left a paternal grandmother, and a maternal grandfather who had a wife living, the question being whether the estate was to be divided into two or into three parts. It was held, that for the purposes of inheritance, the husband and wife did not constitute one person in law, and that each of the three took an equal share.⁸

40. It sometimes happens that a testator, by accident or in-

¹ *Gilpin v. Hollingsworth*, 3 Md. 190; *Philips v. Dashiell*, 1 H. & J. 478; *Hoover v. Gregory*, 10 Yerg. 444; *Buckley v. Buckley*, 11 Barb. 43; *Ellis v. Page*, 7 Cush. 161; *Posey v. Budd*, 21 Md. 480. The law is altered in England in this respect, by the statute 3 & 4 Wm. IV. ch. 106, § 3.

² *Culbertson v. Duly*, 7 W. & S. 195.

³ *Chubb v. Johnson*, 11 Tex. 469; *Wilson v. Wilson*, 13 Barb. 252.

⁴ *Baxter v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 260.

⁵ *Lyon v. Kain*, 36 Ill. 368.

⁶ *Emerson v. White*, 9 Fost. 482.

⁷ *Prickett v. Parker*, 3 Ohio St. 394.

⁸ *Knapp v. Windsor*, 6 Cush. 156.

tention, omits the name of a child or grandchild, in the provisions of his will, and questions arise as to what are the rights of such child or grandchild in respect to the testator's property. It seems to depend entirely upon the intention of the devisor, the child being without remedy if his parent or grandparent deliberately determines to disinherit him. But if the child or grandchild is not named in the will, the law will presume it is an accidental omission, and therefore lets him in to claim the share of the estate of the testator to which he would have been entitled, had he died intestate. This, of course, applies only to grandchildren where the child is dead, and they come in in his place.¹ And in Massachusetts, this was held to extend to children born after the making of the will.² What shall be considered such an omission of the child as to allow him to come in as heir, depends, of course, upon the construction of the will showing that the testator did or did not have the child in view in making the devise in his will. Thus, where the testator left the disposal of his property "as well with reference to our child or children as A B," it was held to be such a reference to a child as not to leave the estate intestate as to him.³

*41. It has already been stated that every heir takes [*416] his land by descent, subject to the debts of the intestate, provided it be necessary for that purpose, and the requisite proceedings are had within the period of limitation within which lands, in the hands of heirs, are, by statute, made liable for such debts. And in order to determine the respective rights and liabilities, in this respect, of persons inheriting portions of an intestate's estate, there are rules in several of the States for "marshalling the assets," as it is called, or determining the order in which the estate, real and personal, shall be applied in the payment of the intestate's debts.⁴

42. It is not always easy to determine whether claims to or interests in lands are or are not inheritable, and pass by descent. Among some of these which have come under the con-

¹ *Gage v. Gage*, 9 Fost. 533.

² *Bancroft v. Ives*, 3 Gray, 367; *Mass. Gen. Stat.* ch. 92, § 26.

³ *Beck v. Metz*, 25 Mo. 70.

⁴ See *Hays v. Jackson*, 6 Mass. 149.

sideration of courts, are the claims to lands which had been "located" under the laws respecting public lands, and surveyed but not actually patented by the ancestor during his life. In one case, the patent issued to the heirs after the ancestor's death, and it was held that they took by descent, and not as purchasers.¹ So where A devised lands to B, upon a condition subsequent, and made C his residuary devisee, C died, and then B committed a breach of the condition under which he held his estate, and it was held, that the possibility of regaining the estate by making an entry for condition broken, which passed to C by the devise, descended to his heirs at his death.² Where lands were sold for taxes, but the purchaser died before a deed had been delivered, although a certificate of sale had been delivered to him, it was held, that the interest in the lands descended to his heirs.³

43. Where the owner of the land leased it in fee, reserving rent, and died, it was held, that rents accruing due after the death of the lessor, descend and pass to his heirs, as a part of his inheritance.⁴

[*417] *44. In distributing estates among heirs and distributees of intestates, a principle is adopted in most, and it is believed all the States, whereby, if any heir or distributee has received any part of his share of his father's estate during his lifetime, the same will be deducted from his share of what the intestate shall have left at his death, provided such share shall exceed the amount in value which he shall have received in the lifetime of his father. The sum thus advanced is called an *advancement*, and may consist of real and personal estate. But in order to its being allowed in estimating the several shares to be received by the heirs or distributees, it must be shown to have been intended as an advancement, by certain forms of proof which the law has prescribed. These rules of evidence are not uniform, each State generally prescribing its own rules by statute.⁵ But as much of what has been said of the laws of de-

¹ *Bond v. Swearingen*, 1 Ohio, 182; *Frizzle v. Veach*, 1 Dana, 211; *Shanks v. Lucas*, 4 Blackf. 476.

² *Clapp v. Stoughton*, 10 Pick. 463.

³ *Rice v. White*, 8 Ohio, 216.

⁴ *Green v. Massie*, 13 Ill. 363; *Hasloge v. Krugh*, 25 Penn. St. 97.

⁵ 4 Kent, Com. 418, 419.

scent, is designed rather to indicate the subjects of legislation upon the general doctrine, than as an attempt to give accurate details of these laws, it only remains to refer the reader to the accompanying outline of the systems of the different States, so far as they can be gathered in a general statement of the present state of legislation, as it appears in the volumes cited in the following pages.

NOTE.

STATUTE RULES OF DESCENT.

The rules of descent, prescribed by the statutes of the several United States, are as follows:—

In *Alabama*, the real estate of an intestate descends,—

- I. To the children and their descendants equally.
- II. To the brothers and sisters or their descendants.
- III. If none of these, to the father, if living, if not, to the mother.
- IV. If there be neither of these, then to the next of kin in equal degree.

*V. If there be none of the above-mentioned kindred, then to the [*418] husband or wife; and in default of these, it escheats to the State.

VI. There is no representation among collaterals except with the descendants of brothers and sisters of the intestate.

VII. There is no distinction between the whole and half blood, except that in case the inheritance was ancestral, those not of the blood of the ancestor are excluded as against those of the same degree. Ala. Code, 1867, §§ 1888-1892.

In *Arkansas*, real estate of inheritance descends,—

- I. To the children or their descendants in equal parts.
- II. To the father, then to the mother.
- III. To the brothers and sisters, or their descendants.
- IV. To the grandfather, grandmother, uncles, and aunts, and their descendants, in equal parts; and so on, passing to the nearest lineal ancestor and his descendants.

V. If there be no such kindred, then to the husband or wife; and in default of these, it escheats to the State.

VI. The descendants of the intestate, in all cases, take by right of representation, where they are in different degrees.

VII. If the estate come from the father, and the intestate die without descendants, it goes to the father and his heirs; and if the estate be maternal,

then to the mother and her heirs. But if the estate be an acquired one, it goes to the father for life, remainder to the collateral kindred; and in default of father, then to mother for life, and remainder to collateral heirs.

VIII. In default of father and mother, then first to the brothers and sisters, and their descendants of the father; then to those of the mother. This applies only where there is no near kindred, lineal or collateral.

IX. The half-blood inherits equally with the whole blood in the same degree; but if the estate be ancestral, it goes to those of the blood of the ancestor from whom it was derived.

X. In all cases not provided for by the statute, the inheritance descends according to the course of the common law. Dig. Ark. Stat. 1858, ch. 56.

In California,—

I. If there be a surviving husband or wife, and only one child, or the issue of one child, in equal shares to the surviving husband or wife, and child, or issue of such child. If there be more than one child, or one and the issue of one or more, then one third to the surviving husband or wife, and the remainder to the children or issue of such by right of representation. If there be no child living, then to lineal descendants equally, if they are in the same degree, otherwise by right of representation.

II. If there be no issue, then in equal shares to the surviving husband or wife and to the intestate's father. If there be no father, then one half in equal shares to the brothers and sisters of the intestate, and the issue of such by right of representation, provided, if there be a mother, she shall take an equal share with the brothers and sisters. If there be no surviving issue, husband or wife, the estate goes to the father.

III. If there be no issue, nor husband, nor wife, nor father, then in equal shares to the brothers and sisters of the intestate, and to children of such by right of representation; provided there be a mother also, she takes equally with the brothers and sisters.

[*419] *IV. If there be none of these except the mother, she takes the estate, to the exclusion of the issue of deceased brothers and sisters.

V. If there be a surviving husband or wife, and no issue, father, mother, brother, or sister, the whole goes to the surviving husband or wife.

VI. If none of these, to the next of kin in equal degree, those claiming through the nearest ancestor to be preferred to those claiming through one more remote.

VII. If there be several children, or one child and the issue of one or more, and any such surviving child die, under age, and unmarried, the estate of such child which came from such deceased parent passes to the other children of the same parent and the issue of such by right of representation.

VIII. If all the other children be dead, in such case, and any of them have left issue, then the estate descends to such issue equally if in the same degree, otherwise by right of representation.

IX. If the intestate leave no husband or wife, nor kindred, the estate escheats to the State for the use of the common schools.

X. The degrees of kindred are computed according to the rules of the civil law, and kindred of the half-blood inherit equally with those of the whole blood in the same degree, unless the estate come from an ancestor, in which case those not of the blood of such ancestor are excluded. Wood, Dig. Cal. Laws, 1858, p. 423; Stats. 1862, ch. 447.

In *Connecticut*, —

I. To the children of the intestate and their legal representatives.

II. To brothers and sisters of the intestate, of the whole blood, and their representatives.

III. To the parent or parents of the intestate.

IV. To the brothers and sisters of the half-blood, and their representatives.

V. To the next of kin in equal degree, kindred of the whole blood to take in preference to kindred of the half-blood, in equal degree, and no representatives to be admitted among collaterals, after the representatives of brothers and sisters.

VI. Estates which came to the intestate from his parent ancestor, or other kindred, go —

1. To the brothers and sisters of the intestate of the blood of the person or ancestor from whom such estate came or descended.

2. To the children of such person or ancestor and their representatives.

3. To the brothers and sisters of such person or ancestor and their representatives.

4. If there be none such, then it is divided as other real estate. Conn. Gen. Stat. 1866, p. 414, § 57.

In *Dacotah*, —

I. To husband.

II. One third to widow and two thirds to next lineal descendants and the successors of those deceased.

III. If no children, to the widow to the value of two thousand dollars, all over to the father or mother, or brothers and sisters, and their successors.

IV. To widow, if no children, parent's brothers or sisters,

V. To nearest lineal descendants.

VI. To next of kin. Civil Code, 1866.

In *Delaware*, when any person, having title or right, legal or equitable, to any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, in fee-simple, [*420] dies intestate such estate descends, —

I. To the children of the intestate, and their issue by right of representation.

II. If there be no issue, then to his brothers and sisters of the whole blood, and their issue, by right of representation.

III. Estates to which the intestate has title, by descent or devise, from his parent or ancestor, go, in default of issue, to his brothers and sisters of the blood of such parent or ancestor, if there be any such.

IV. If there be any of these, then to the father.

V. If there be no father, then to the mother.

VI. If there be no kindred above mentioned, then to the next of kin in equal degree and their issue by representation; provided that collateral kindred, claiming through a nearer common ancestor, shall be preferred to those claiming through one more remote. Del. Rev. Code, 1853, ch. 85, p. 276.

In *Florida*, the rules of descent are the same as in *Virginia*. Thomp. Dig. Flor. Laws, pp. 188, 189.

In *Georgia*, real estate descends, —

I. To the widow and children, in equal shares; and to the representatives of the children *per stirpes*.

II. If there be a widow and no issue, then half to the widow, and the other half to the next of kin. But if there be issue and no widow, the whole goes to the issue.

III. If there be neither widow nor issue, then to the next of kin in equal degree, and their representatives. But no representation is admitted among collaterals further than the children of nephews and nieces.

IV. If the father and mother be alive, and a child dies intestate and without issue, such father or mother, in case the father be dead, come in on the same footing as a brother or sister would do. Provided, that if the mother has married again, she shall take no part of the estate of such child, unless it shall be the last or only child.

V. If there be no issue but brothers and sisters of the whole and half blood, then those in the paternal line only inherit equally, But if there be none of these nor their issue, then those of the half-blood and their issue in the maternal line inherit.

VI. The next of kin are to be investigated by the following rules of consanguinity, namely, children to be nearest; parents, brothers, and sisters, to be equal in respect to distribution, and cousins to be next to them. Cobb, New Dig. Ga. Laws, 1851, Vol. I. p. 297; Laws, 1859, p. 38, no. 31.

In *Illinois*, real estate descends, —

I. To children and their descendants by right of representation.

II. If no children or their descendants, nor widow, then to the parents, brothers, and sisters of the deceased in equal parts; allowing to each of the parents, if living, a child's part, or to the survivor of them, if one be [*421] dead, a double portion; *and if there be no parent, then the whole to the brothers and sisters and their descendants.

III. Where there is a widow and no children or their descendants, then one half of the real estate goes to the widow as her exclusive estate forever.

IV. If there be none of the above-mentioned persons, then the estate descends in equal parts to the next of kin in equal degree, computing by the rules of the civil law; and there is no representation among collaterals,

except with the descendants of the brothers and sisters of the intestate; and there is no distinction between the kindred of the whole and the half blood.

V. When a *feme covert* dies intestate, leaving no children or their descendants, then the one half of the real estate of the decedent goes to the husband forever. 2 Ill. Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 1199.

In *Indiana*, real property descends,—

I. To the children and their descendants equally, if in the same degree; if not, *per stirpes*.

II. If no descendants, then half to the father and mother, as joint-tenants, or to the survivor; and the other half to the brothers and sisters, and their issue.

III. If there be no father and mother, the brothers and sisters of the intestate take the whole. If there be no brothers nor sisters descendants of them, it goes to the father and mother as joint-tenants; and if either be dead, to the other.

IV. If there be none of these, if the inheritance came from the paternal line, then it goes,—

1. To the paternal grandfather and grandmother, as joint-tenants, or the survivor of them.

2. To the uncles and aunts and their issue.

3. To the next of kin in equal degree among the paternal kindred.

4. If none of these, then to the maternal kindred in the same order.

V. Maternal inheritances go to the maternal kindred in the same manner.

VI. Estates not ancestral descend,—

1. In two equal parts to the paternal and to the maternal kindred, and on failure of either line the other takes the whole.

VII. Kindred of the half blood inherit equally with those of the whole blood, except that ancestral estates go only to those of the blood of the ancestor; provided that on failure of such kindred, other kindred of the half blood inherit as if they were of the whole blood.

VIII. When the estate came to the intestate by gift or by conveyance, in consideration of love and affection, and he dies without issue, it reverts to the donor, if he be still living, saving to the widow or widower his or her rights therein; provided, that the husband or wife of the intestate shall have a lien thereon for the value of their lasting improvements.

IX. In default of heirs, it escheats to the State for the use of the common schools.

X. Tenancies by the curtesy and in dower are abolished, and the widow takes one third of the estate in fee-simple, free from all demands of creditors; *provided, that when the estate exceeds in value \$10,000, [*422] she takes one fourth only; and when it exceeds \$20,000, one fifth only.

XI. When the widow marries again, she cannot alienate the estate, and if during such marriage she die, the estate goes to her children by the former marriage, if any there be.

XII. When the estate, real and personal, does not exceed \$300, the whole goes to the widow.

XIII. A surviving husband inherits one third of the real estate of the wife.

XIV. If a husband die, leaving a widow and only one child, the real estate descends one half to each.

XV. When a husband or wife dies, leaving no child, but a father or mother, or either of them, then three fourths of the estate goes to the widow or widower, and one fourth to the father and mother jointly, or the survivor of them; but if it does not exceed \$1,000, the whole to the widow or widower.

XVI. If there be no child or parent, the whole goes to the surviving husband or wife. 1 Ind. Rev. Stat. 1852, ch. 27.

In Iowa, —

I. To children and their issue by right of representation.

II. If no issue, one half to the parents of the intestate, and the other half to his wife; if he leaves no wife, the portion which would have gone to her goes to his parents. Laws of 1858, ch. 63, p. 96.

III. If one of the parents be dead, the surviving parent takes the share of both, including that which would have belonged to the intestate's wife if she had been living. *Ibid.*

IV. If both parents be dead, their portion goes in the same manner as if they or either of them had outlived the intestate, to their heirs. *Ibid.*

V. If the mother be the surviving parent, she takes only a life estate, remainder to the children of her body by her deceased husband, he being father of the intestate. If there be no such children nor issue of such, then the property is to be divided between the nearest heirs of the father and mother equally. *Ibid.*

VI. If there be no heirs, the estate escheats to the State. Iowa, Code, 1851, §§ 1408-1415; Iowa, Laws, 1858, ch. 63, p. 96; Revision, 1860, §§ 2436-2498.

In Kansas, —

I. To children in equal shares, and to the issue of such by right of representation.

II. To the wife, and if no wife, to the father.

III. If the father be dead, the portion which would have fallen to him is disposed of in the same manner as though he had outlived the intestate, and died in the possession of the portion thus falling to his share, and so on through each ascending ancestor and issue, unless heirs are sooner found.

IV. If heirs are not found in the male line, the portion thus inherited goes to the mother of the intestate and to her heirs, following the same rules as above prescribed.

V. If heirs are not thus found, the portion uninherited goes to the wife of the intestate or to her heirs, if dead, according to like rules; and if he has had more than one wife, who either died or survived in lawful wedlock, it is equally divided between the one who is living and the heirs of those who are

dead, or between the heirs of all, if all are dead, such heirs taking by right of representation.

VI. If still there be property uninherited, it escheats to the State.

VII. Children of the half blood inherit equally with children of the whole blood. Gen. Laws, 1862, ch. 80, §§ 16, 22, 30.

In *Kentucky*, the Statute of Descents is the same as in *Virginia*. 1 Ky. Rev. Stat., Stant. ed. 1860, ch. 30, p. 419.

In *Louisiana*, —

I. To the children and their issue; if in equal degree, then *per capita*; otherwise, *per stirpes*.

II. To the parents of the intestate, one moiety; and the other moiety to his brothers and sisters and their issue. If one parent be dead, his or her share goes to the brothers and sisters of the deceased, who then have three fourths. If both parents be dead, the whole goes to the brothers and sisters and their issue.

III. If the brothers and sisters are all of the same marriage, they share equally. If they are of different marriages, the portion is divided equally between the *paternal and maternal lines of the intestate, the [*423] german brothers and sisters taking a part in each line. If the brothers and sisters are on one side only, they take the whole, to the exclusion of all relations of the other line.

IV. If there be no issue, nor parent, nor brothers, nor sisters, nor their issue, then the inheritance goes to the *ascendants* in the paternal and maternal lines, one moiety to each; those in each line taking *per capita*. If there is in the nearest degree but one ascendant in the two lines, he excludes all others of a remoter degree, and takes the whole.

V. If there be none of the heirs above mentioned, then the inheritance goes to the collateral relations of the intestate, those in the nearest degree excluding all others. If there are several persons in the same degree, they take *per capita*.

VI. Representation takes place *ad infinitum* in the direct descending line, but does not take place in favor of ascendants; the nearest in degree always excluding those of a degree superior or more remote.

VII. In the collateral line, representation is admitted in favor of the issue of the brothers and sisters of the intestate, whether they succeed in concurrence with the uncles and aunts, or whether the brothers and sisters being dead, their issue succeed in equal or unequal degrees.

VIII. When representation is admitted, the partition is made *per stirpes*; and if one root has produced several branches, the subdivision is also made by roots in each branch, and the members of the branch take between themselves *per capita*. La. Civ. Code, Art. 882-910.

In *Maine*. The law of descents in Maine was originally derived from that of *Massachusetts*, and is now the same, except that in Maine there is no pro-

vision that in default of kindred the estate shall descend to the widow or to the husband. The statute of Maine regulates the descent of the *real estate* of the intestate without further specification. Me. Rev. Stat. 1847, ch. 75, §§ 1, 2.

In *Maryland*, when any person dies seised of an estate in any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, in fee-simple or in fee-simple conditional, or of an estate in fee-tail, such estate descends, —

I. To children and their descendants.

II. If no issue, and the estate descended on the part of the father, then to the father.

III. If no father, to the brothers and sisters of the intestate of the blood of the father and their descendants.

IV. If none of these, then to the grandfather on the part of the father, if living, otherwise to his descendants in equal degree; and if there be none such, then to the father of such grandfather and his descendants, and so on to the next lineal male paternal ancestor and his descendants, without end. And if there be no paternal ancestor, nor descendants of any, then to the mother and the kindred on her side in the same manner as above directed.

V. If there be no issue, and the estate descended on the part of [*424] the mother, *then to the mother; and if no mother living, then to the brothers and sisters of her blood and their descendants; and if there be none of these, to her kindred in the same order as above; and in default of maternal kindred, then to the paternal kindred in the same manner as above directed.

VI. If the estate was acquired by purchase, and there be no issue, then it descends, —

1. To the brothers and sisters of the whole blood, and their descendants in equal degree.

2. Then to the brothers and sisters of the half blood.

3. If none of these, to the father.

4. If no father, to the mother.

5. If neither of the above kindred, then to the paternal grandfather and his descendants in equal degree; then to the maternal grandfather and his descendants in equal degree; then to the paternal great-grandfather and his descendants in the same manner, and so on, alternating and giving preference to the paternal ancestor.

VII. If there be no kindred, then the estate goes to the surviving wife or husband, and their kindred, as an estate by purchase; and if the intestate has had more husbands or wives than one, all of whom are dead, then to their kindred in equal degree, equally.

VIII. No distinction is made between brothers and sisters of the whole and half blood, all being descendants of the same father, where the estate descended on the part of the father, nor where all are descendants of the same mother, the estate descending on her part.

IX. Children take by representation; but no representation is admitted

among collaterals after brothers' and sisters' children. 1 Dorsey, Md. Laws, 745; Code, 1860, pp. 330-333.

In *Massachusetts*, when a person dies seised of lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or of any right thereto, or entitled to any interest therein, in fee-simple or for the life of another, they descend, subject to his debts, —

I. In equal shares to his children and the issue of any deceased child by right of representation; and if there is no child of the intestate living at his death, then to all his other lineal descendants; equally, if they are all in the same degree of kindred to the intestate; otherwise, according to the right of representation.

II. If he leaves no issue, then to his father.

III. If he leaves no issue nor father, then in equal shares to his mother, brothers, and sisters, and to the children of any deceased brother or sister by right of representation.

IV. If he leaves no issue nor father, and no brothers or sisters, then to his mother, to the exclusion of the issue of any deceased brother or sister.

V. If he leaves no issue, and no father, mother, brother, nor sister, then to his next of kin in equal degree; those claiming through the nearest ancestor to be preferred to those claiming through one more remote.

VI. If a person dies leaving several children, or leaving one child and the issue of one or more others, and any such surviving child dies under age and *not having been married, all the estate that came to the [*425] deceased child by inheritance from such deceased parent, descends in equal shares to the other children of the same parent, and to the issue of any such other children who have died, by right of representation.

VII. If at the death of such child, all the other children of such deceased parent are also dead, and any of them have left issue, the estate that came to such child by inheritance from such parent descends to all the issue of the other children of the same parent; equally, if they are in the same degree of kindred to the child; otherwise, according to the right of representation.

VIII. If the intestate leaves a widow and no kindred, his estate descends to his widow; and if the intestate is a married woman, and leaves no kindred, her estate descends to her husband.

IX. In default of kindred, the estate escheats to the Commonwealth.

It is provided that the degrees of kindred shall be computed according to the rules of the civil law; and that the kindred of the half blood shall inherit equally with those of the whole blood in the same degree. Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 91, §§ 1-5.

In *Mississippi*, when any person dies seised of any estate of inheritance in lands, tenements, and hereditaments, it descends, —

I. To his children and their descendants in equal parts by right of representation.

II. To brothers and sisters and their descendants in the same manner.

III. If there be none of these, then to the father, if living; if not, to the mother; if both be living, then to each in equal portions.

IV. To the next of kin in equal degree, computing by the rules of the civil law.

V. There is no representation among collaterals except with the descendants of the brothers and sisters of the intestate.

VI. There is no distinction between the half and the whole blood, except that the whole blood is preferred to the half blood, in the same degree.

VII. A surviving wife inherits the whole estate in preference to collateral relatives more remote than the fourth degree, by the rules of the civil law. *Miss. Rev. Code, 1857, p. 452.*

In *Missouri*, real estate of inheritance descends, --

I. To children or their descendants in equal parts.

II. If none of these, to the father, mother, brothers, and sisters, and their descendants in equal parts.

III. If none of these, then to the husband or wife.

IV. If no husband or wife, then to the grandfather, grandmother, uncles, and aunts, and their descendants in equal parts.

V. If none of these, then to the great-grandfathers, great-grandmothers, and their descendants in equal parts; and so on, passing to the nearest lineal ancestors, and their children and their descendants, in equal parts.

[*426] *VI. If there be no kindred above named, nor any husband or wife, capable of inheriting, then the estate goes to the kindred of the wife or husband of the intestate, in the like course as if such wife or husband had survived the intestate, and then died entitled to the estate.

VII. When some of the collaterals are of the half blood and some of the whole blood, those of the half blood inherit only half as much as those of the whole blood; but if all such collaterals be of the half blood, they have whole portions, only giving to the ascendants double portions.

VIII. When all are of equal degree of consanguinity to the intestate, they take *per capita*; if of different degrees, *per stirpes*. 1 Mo. Gen. Stat. ch. 129, § 14.

In *Michigan*, the Statute of Descent is the same as in *Wisconsin*. 2 Mich. Comp. Laws, 1857, ch. 91, p. 858.

In *Minnesota*, the same is true as in *Michigan*. Minn. Stat. 1853, ch. 37, p. 411.

In *New Hampshire*, the real estate of every intestate descends in equal shares, --

I. To the children of the deceased and the legal representatives of such of them as are dead.

II. If there be no issue, to the father, if he is living.

III. If there be no issue nor father, in equal shares to the mother, and to the brothers and sisters, or their representatives.

IV. To the next of kin in equal shares.

V. If the intestate be a minor and unmarried, his estate, derived by descent

or devise from his father or mother, goes to his brothers or sisters, or their representatives, to the exclusion of the other parent.

VI. No representation is admitted among collaterals beyond the degree of brothers' and sisters' children.

VII. In default of heirs, it escheats to the State. N. H. Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 184, §§ 1-7.

In *Nebraska*, real estate of inheritance descends, —

I. To children equally, and their issue by right of representation.

II. To the lineal descendants equally if of the same degree, otherwise by right of representation.

III. To widow for life, and then over to the intestate's father.

IV. To the intestate's father.

V. To brothers and sisters, and mother equally.

VI. To mother.

VII. To the next of kin in equal degree. If there are no kindred, the widow takes all. Rev. Stat. 1866, p. 61.

In *New York*, the real estate of an intestate descends, —

I. To his lineal descendants.

II. To his father.

III. To his mother.

IV. To his collateral relatives.

Subject, however, to these rules, —

1. Lineal descendants, being in equal degree, take in equal parts.

2. If any of the children of the intestate are living and others are dead, leaving issue, such issue takes by representation.

3. The preceding rule applies to all descendants of unequal degrees; so *that those who are in the nearest degree of consanguinity take [*427] the share which would have descended to them, had all the descendants in the same degree been living, and the children in each degree take the share of their parent.

4. If there be no descendants, but the father be living, he takes the whole, unless the inheritance came to the intestate on the part of his mother, and the mother be living. But if she be dead, then the inheritance descending on her part goes to the father for life, and the reversion to the brothers and sisters of the intestate, and their descendants; but if there be none living, then to the father in fee.

V. If there be no descendants and no father, or a father not entitled to take as above, then the inheritance descends to the mother for life, and the reversion to the brothers and sisters of the intestate, and their descendants, by representation. But if there be none such, then to the mother in fee.

VI. If there be no father or mother capable of inheriting the estate, it descends, in the cases hereafter specified, to the collateral relatives; in equal parts if they are of equal degree, however remote from the intestate.

VII. If all the brothers and sisters of the intestate be living, the inheri-

tance descends to them ; but if some be dead, leaving issue, the issue take by right of representation ; and the same rule applies to all the direct lineal descendants of brothers and sisters, to the remotest degree.

VIII. If there be no heirs entitled to take under either of the preceding sections, the inheritance, if the same shall have come to the intestate on the part of his father, shall descend, —

1. To the brothers and sisters of the father of the intestate in equal shares, if all be living.
2. If some be living and others dead, leaving issue, then according to the right of representation.
3. If all the brothers and sisters are dead, then to their descendants.

In all cases the inheritance is to descend in the same manner as if all such brothers and sisters had been brothers and sisters of the intestate.

IX. If there be no brothers and sisters nor descendants of such, of the father's side, then the inheritance goes to the brothers and sisters of the mother and their descendants, in the same manner.

X. Where the inheritance has come to the intestate on the part of his mother, the same descends to the brothers and sisters of the mother and to their descendants ; and if there be no such, to those of the father, as before prescribed.

XI. If the inheritance has not come to the intestate on the part of either father or mother, it descends to collaterals on both sides, in equal shares.

XII. Relatives of the half blood inherit equally with the whole blood, unless the inheritance came to the intestate by descent, devise, or gift of some one of his ancestors ; in which case none inherit who are not of the blood of that ancestor.

XIII. In all cases not otherwise provided for, the inheritance descends according to the course of the common law.

[*428] *XIV. Real estate, held in trust for any other person, if not devised by the person for whose use it is held, descends to his heirs, according to the preceding rules. 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat. 4th ed. pp. 157 - 161.

In *New Jersey*, when a person dies seised of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, in his or her own right in fee-simple, they descend, —

I. To the children of the intestate and their issue, by right of representation to the remotest degree.

II. To brothers and sisters of the whole blood, and their issue in the same manner.

III. To the father, unless the inheritance came from the part of the mother, in which case it descends as if the father had previously died.

IV. To the mother for life, and after her death to go as if the mother had previously died.

V. If there be no such kindred, then to brothers and sisters of the half blood and their issue by right of representation. But if the estate came from an ancestor, then only to those of the blood of such ancestor, if any be living.

VI. If there be none of these, then to the next of kin in equal degree; subject to the restriction afore-mentioned as to ancestral estates. Nixon, Dig. N. J. Laws, 1855, pp. 194-196.

In *North Carolina*, when any person dies seised of any inheritance, or of any right thereto, or entitled to any interest therein, it descends according to the following rules, —

I. Inheritances lineally descend to the issue of the person who died last seised, but do not lineally ascend, except as hereinafter stated.

II. Females inherit equally with males, and younger with older children.

III. Lineal descendants represent their ancestor.

IV. On failure of lineal descendants, where the inheritance has been transmitted by descent or otherwise from an ancestor to whom the intestate was an heir, it goes to the next collateral relations of the blood of that ancestor, subject to the two preceding rules.

V. When the inheritance is not so derived, or the blood of such ancestor is extinct, then it goes to the next collateral relation of the person last seised, whether of the paternal or maternal line, subject to the same rules.

VI. Collateral relations of the half blood inherit equally with those of the whole blood, and the degrees of relationship are computed according to the rules which prevail in descents at common law. *Provided*, that if there be no issue, nor brother, nor sister, nor issue of such, the inheritance vests in the father, if living, and if not, then in the mother, if living.

VII. If there be no heirs, the widow is deemed such, and inherits.

VIII. An estate for the life of another is deemed an inheritance; and a person is deemed to have been seised, if he had any right, title, or interest in the inheritance. N. Car. Rev. Code, 1854, ch. 38, p. 248.

*In *Ohio*, when any person dies intestate, having title or right to [*429] real estate of inheritance, which came to him by devise or deed of gift from any ancestor, such estate descends, —

I. To the children, or their representatives.

II. To the husband or wife, relict of the intestate, during his or her natural life.

III. To the brothers and sisters of the intestate of the blood of the ancestor, whether of the whole or half blood, or their representatives.

IV. To the ancestor from whom the estate came by deed or gift, if living.

V. To the brothers and sisters of such ancestor, or their representatives; and if there be no such, then to the brothers and sisters of the intestate of the half blood and their representatives, though not of the blood of the ancestor from whom the estate came.

VI. To the next of kin to the intestate, of the blood of the ancestors from whom the estate came.

VII. If the estate came not by descent, devise, or deed of gift, it descends as follows, —

1. To the children of the intestate and their representatives.
2. To the husband or wife of the intestate.
3. To the brothers and sisters of the whole blood and their representatives.
4. To brothers and sisters of the half blood and their legal representatives.
5. To the father, or if the father be dead, to the mother.
6. To the next of kin to and of the blood of the intestate.

VIII. If there be no kindred, then to the surviving husband or wife as an estate of inheritance, and if there be no such relict, it escheats to the State. R. S. 1860, ch. 36, §§ 1-3.

In *Oregon*, the rules of descent are the same as in *Massachusetts*, except that in *Oregon* it is provided, that if the intestate leave no issue, nor father, and no brother nor sister, living at his death, the estate shall descend to his mother to the exclusion of the issue of his deceased brothers or sisters; and there is no provision, as there is in *Massachusetts*, that in default of kindred the estate shall descend to the surviving husband or wife, if any. *Oreg. Stat.* ch. 11, p. 379.

In *Pennsylvania*, real estate descends, —

I. To children and their descendants; equally, if they are all in the same degree; if not, then by representation, the issue in every case taking only such share as would have descended to the parent, if living.

II. In default of issue, then to the father and mother during their joint lives and the life of the survivor of them; and after them to the brothers and sisters of the intestate of the whole blood, and their children by representation.

III. If there be none of these, then to the next of kin, being the descendants of brothers and sisters of the whole blood.

IV. If none of these, to the father and mother, if living, or the survivor of them, in fee.

V. In default of these, to the brothers and sisters of the half blood and their children by representation.

[*480] *VI. In default of all persons above described, then to the next of kin of the intestate.

VII. Before the act of 27th April, 1855, no representation among collaterals was allowed after brothers' and sisters' children; but by that act it was permitted to the grandchildren of brothers and sisters, and the children of uncles and aunts.

VIII. No person can inherit an estate unless he is of the blood of the ancestor from whom it descended, or by whom it was given or devised to the intestate.

IX. In default of known heirs or kindred, the estate is vested in the surviving husband or wife.

X. In default of these, it escheats to the State. *Purdon, Dig. Penn. Laws*, ed. 1857, pp. 452, 1129; and 9th ed. 1861, p. 562.

In *Rhode Island*, where any person having title to any real estate of inheritance dies intestate, such estate descends in equal portions, —

I. To his children or their descendants.

II. To the father.

III. To the mother, brothers, and sisters, and their descendants.

IV. If there be none of these, the inheritance goes in equal moieties to the paternal and maternal kindred, each in the following course, —

1. To the grandfather, if there be any.

2. To the grandmother, uncles, and aunts, on the same side, and their descendants.

3. To the great-grandfathers, or great-grandfather.

4. To the great-grandmothers, or great-grandmother, and the brothers and sisters of the grandfathers and grandmothers and their descendants, and so on without end; passing first to the nearest lineal male ancestors, and for want of them to the lineal female ancestors in the same degree, and the descendants of such male and female lineal ancestors.

V. No right in the inheritance accrues to any persons whatsoever, other than to the children of the intestate, unless such persons be in being, and capable, in law, to take as heirs at the time of the intestate's death.

VI. When the inheritance is directed to go by moieties, as above, to the paternal and maternal kindred, if there be no such kindred on the one part, the whole goes to the other part; and if there be none of either part, the whole goes to the husband or wife of the intestate; and if the wife or husband be dead, it goes to his or her kindred in the like course as if such husband or wife had survived the intestate and then died, entitled to the estate.

VII. The descendants of any person deceased inherit the estate which such person would have inherited, had such person survived the intestate.

VIII. If the estate came by descent, gift, or devise, from the parent or other kindred of the intestate, and such intestate die without children, it goes to the next of kin to the intestate, of the blood of the person from whom such estate came or descended, if any there be. R. I. Rev.

Stat. 1857, ch. 159, §§ 1-6. *In default of heirs, the estate is [*431] taken possession of by the town where it may be. R. I. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 160.

In *South Carolina*, when any person possessed of, interested in, or entitled to any real estate in his own right, in fee-simple, dies intestate, it descends, —

I. One third to the widow in fee, the remainder to the children.

II. Lineal descendants represent their parents.

III. If there be no issue or other lineal descendant, then one half goes to the widow, and the other half to the father, or, if he be dead, to the mother.

IV. If there be neither issue nor parent, then one half goes to the widow, and the other half to the brothers and sisters and their issue by representation.

V. If there be no issue, nor parent, nor brother, nor sister of the whole

blood; but a widow, and a brother or sister of the half blood, and a child or children of a brother or sister of the whole blood; then the widow takes one moiety, and the other is divided equally between the brothers and sisters of the half blood, and the children of the brothers and sisters of the whole blood; the children of every deceased brother or sister of the whole blood taking among them a share equal to the share of a brother or sister of the half blood. But if there be no brother or sister of the half blood, then a moiety of the estate descends to the child or children of the deceased brother or sister; and if there be no child of the whole blood, then to the brothers and sisters of the half blood.

VI. If there be no issue, nor parent, nor brother, nor sister of the whole blood, nor their children, nor any brother nor sister of the half blood, then one half goes to the widow, and the other half to the lineal ancestors; but if there be none of these, then the widow takes two thirds and the residue goes to the next of kin.

VII. If there be no widow, her share in each of the preceding cases goes to the residue.

VIII. On the decease of the wife, the husband takes the same share in his wife's estate that she would have taken in his had she survived him, and the remainder goes in the same manner, as above described in case of the intestacy of a man.

IX. If there be no widow nor issue, but a surviving parent and brothers and sisters, then it goes in equal shares to the father, or if he be dead, to the mother, and to the brothers and sisters and their issue, by representation.

X. If there be no issue, parent, nor brother nor sister of the whole blood, nor their children, nor brother nor sister of the half blood, nor lineal ancestor, nor next of kin, the whole goes to the surviving husband or wife. 5 S. Car. Stat. at Large, 162, 163, 305; 6 Id. 284, 285. ♦

In *Tennessee*, the land of an intestate descends, —

I. Without reference to the source of his title, —

1. To all the sons and daughters equally and to their descendants by right of representation.

[*432] *2. If there be none of these, and either parent be living, then to such parent.

II. If the estate was acquired by the intestate, and he died without issue, —

1. To his brothers and sisters of the whole and half blood, born before or after his death, and to their issue by representation.

2. In default of these, to the father and mother as tenants in common.

3. If both be dead, then in equal moieties to the heirs of the father and mother in equal degree, or representing those in equal degree of relationship to the intestate; but if these are not in equal degree, then to the heirs nearest in blood, or representing those nearest in blood to the intestate, in preference to others more remote.

III. When the land came by gift, devise, or descent from a parent or the ancestor of a parent, and he died without issue, —

1. If there be brothers and sisters of the paternal line of the half blood, and such also of the maternal line, then it descends to the brothers and sisters on the part of the parent from whom the estate came, in the same manner as to brothers and sisters of the whole blood, until the line of such parent is exhausted of the half blood, to the exclusion of the other line.

2. If no brothers or sisters, then to the parent, if living, from whom or whose ancestors it came, in preference to the other parent.

3. If both be dead, then to the heirs of the parent from whom or whose ancestor it came.

IV. The same rules of descent are observed in lineal descendants and collaterals respectively, when the lineal descendants are further removed from their ancestor than grandchildren, and when the collaterals are further removed than children of brothers and sisters.

V. If there be no heirs, then to the husband or wife in fee-simple.

VI. A child of color cannot inherit the estate of its mother's husband, unless the mother or husband was a person of color. Tenn. Code, 1858, p. 476, §§ 2420-2425.

In *Texas*, real estate of inheritance descends, —

I. To children and their descendants.

II. To father and mother in equal portions; but if one be dead, then one half to the survivor, and the other to brothers and sisters and their descendants; but if there be none of these, then the whole goes to the surviving father or mother.

III. If there be neither father nor mother, then the whole to the brothers and sisters of the intestate, and their descendants.

IV. If there be no kindred aforesaid, then the estate descends in two moieties, one to the paternal and the other to the maternal kindred in the following course:—

1. To the grandfather and grandmother equally.

2. If only one of these be living, then one half to such survivor and the other to the descendants of the other.

*3. If there be no such descendants, then the whole to the surviving grandparent. [*433]

4. If there be no such, then to the descendants of the grandfather or grandmother, passing to the nearest lineal ancestors.

V. There is no distinction between ancestral and acquired estates.

VI. If there be a surviving husband or wife, and a child or children or their issue, such survivor takes one third of the estate for life, with remainder to children or their descendants.

VII. If no issue or descendants, then the surviving husband or wife takes half the land, without remainder over; and the other half passes according to the preceding rules.

VIII. Among collaterals, those of the half blood inherit only half as much

as those of the whole blood ; but if all be of the half blood, they have whole portions.

IX. If all relations are in the same degree, they take *per capita* ; otherwise, *per stirpes*.—Oldham & White, Dig. Tex. Laws, 1859, p. 99.

In *Vermont*, when any person dies, seized of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments within the State, or any right thereto, or is entitled to any interest therein, the estate descends, —

I. In equal shares to his children, or their representatives.

II. If he leave no issue, his widow is entitled to the whole forever, if the estate does not exceed the sum of one thousand dollars. If it exceeds this sum, then the widow is entitled to such sum and one half of the remainder of the estate ; and the remainder descends as the whole would if no widow had survived ; and if there be no kindred, the widow is entitled to the whole.

III. If there be no issue nor widow, the father takes the whole.

IV. If there be neither of these, it goes to the brothers and sisters equally, and their representatives ; and if his mother be living, she takes the same share as a brother or sister.

V. If none of the relatives above named survive, then it descends in equal shares to the next of kin, in equal degree ; but no person is entitled by right of representation.

VI. The degrees of kindred are computed according to the rules of the civil law, and the half blood inherits equally with the whole blood.

VII. If there be no kindred, it escheats to the town for the use of the schools. *Verm. Comp. Stat.* 1850, ch. 55, and *Gen. Stats.* 1863, ch. 56, §§ 1-3.

In *Virginia*, when a person having title to any real estate of inheritance, dies intestate as to such estate, it descends, —

I. To his children and their descendants.

II. If there be none such, to the father.

III. If no father, to the mother and brothers and sisters, and their descendants.

[*434] *IV. If there be none of these, then one half goes to the paternal, the other to the maternal kindred, as follows, —

1. To the grandfather.

2. To the grandmother, uncles and aunts on the same side, and their descendants.

3. To the great-grandfathers or great-grandfather.

4. To the great-grandmothers, or great-grand mother, and the brothers and sisters of the grandfathers and grandmothers, and their descendants ; and so on, passing to the nearest lineal male ancestors, and for want of these, to the nearest lineal female ancestors in the same degree, and their descendants.

V. If there be no paternal kindred, the whole estate goes to the maternal kindred ; and *vice versa*.

VI. If there be neither paternal nor maternal kindred, the whole goes to the husband or wife of the intestate; and if the husband or wife be dead, then kindred take the estate, in the same manner as though they had survived the intestate, and died.

VII. Collaterals of the half blood inherit only half as much as those of the whole blood. But if all the collaterals be of the half blood, the ascending kindred (if any) have double portions.

VIII. When the estate goes to children, or to the mother, brothers and sisters, or to the grandmothers, uncles and aunts, or to any of his female lineal ancestors, with the children of his deceased lineal ancestors, male and female, in the same degree, they take *per capita*; but if the degrees are unequal, they take *per stirpes*. Va. Code, 1849, ch. 123, p. 522.

In *Wisconsin*, when any person dies seised of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or of any right thereto, or entitled to any interest therein, in fee-simple or for the life of another, not having lawfully devised the same, they descend, —

I. In equal shares to children, and the issue of any deceased child by right of representation; and if there be no child, then to his other lineal descendants, equally, if they are all in the same degree of kindred to the intestate; otherwise according to the right of representation.

II. If there be no issue, then to the widow for her life, and after her decease to his father; and if there be no issue or widow, then to his father.

III. If there be no issue nor father, then to the widow for life, and, after her decease, in equal shares to his brothers and sisters, and the children of such by right of representation; provided, that if he leave a mother she takes an equal share with his brothers and sisters.

IV. If there be no issue, nor widow nor father, then in equal shares to brothers and sisters, and to the children of such by right of representation; provided, if he leave a mother also, she takes an equal share with his brothers and sisters.

V. If there be no issue, nor widow nor father, and no brother nor sister, *then to his mother, to the exclusion of the issue, if any, of deceased brothers and sisters. [*435]

VI. If there be none of these, then to the next of kin in equal degree, but those claiming through the nearest ancestor to be preferred to those claiming through an ancestor more remote; provided, however, that if any person die, leaving several children, or leaving one child and the issue of one or more other children, and any such surviving child shall die under age, and not having been married, all the estate that came to the deceased child by inheritance from such deceased parent descends in equal shares to the other children of the same parent, and to their issue by right of representation.

VII. If, at the death of such child under age, all the other children of such deceased parent are also dead, and any of them have left issue, the estate that came to such child by inheritance from such parent descends to all the issue of other children of the same parent equally, if they are in the same degree of kindred to said child, otherwise according to the right of representation.

VIII. If the intestate leave a widow, and no kindred, his estate descends to such widow.

IX. If there be no widow or kindred, the estate escheats to the people of the State for the use of the primary school fund.

X. The degrees of kindred are computed according to the rules of the civil law; and kindred of the half blood inherit equally with those of the whole blood, in the same degree, unless the inheritance be ancestral, in which case those who are not of the blood of such ancestor are excluded. Wis. Rev. Stat. 1858, ch. 92, p. 554.

ADVANCEMENTS.

In *Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, California, Oregon, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota*, it is provided, that any estate given to a child or other lineal descendant, shall be taken by such child or other descendant towards his share of the intestate's estate; but he shall not be required to refund any part thereof, although it exceeds his share. When such advancement is made in real estate, it is to be considered as part of the real estate to be divided; when in personal estate, as part of the personal estate. If it exceeds his share of the real or personal, he receives so much less of the other as will make his whole share equal. All gifts and grants are deemed to have been made in advancement, if they are so expressed therein, or charged as such by the intestate, or acknowledged in writing as such by the child or other descendant; and in *Vermont*, also, if expressed to be for consideration of love and affection. If the value of the estate so advanced is expressed in the conveyance, or charge, or in the acknowledgment, this is to be allowed in the distribution; otherwise, the value is to be estimated at the time when given. If such child or other descendant dies before the intestate, leaving issue, the advancement made to him is to be regarded as made to such issue, and distribution is to be made accordingly. Me. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 75, §§ 5-7; Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 91, §§ 6-10; Verm. Comp. Stat. ch. 55, §§ 8-12; Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 56, §§ 12-17; Wood, Dig. Cal. Laws, 1858, p. 424; [*436] Oreg. *Stat. 1855, p. 380; Wis. Rev. Stat. 1858, ch. 92, §§ 5-10; 2 Mich. Comp. Laws, p. 860, ch. 91, §§ 6-11; Minn. Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 413.

In *New Hampshire*, it is provided that an advancement shall be accounted for according to its value in the division of the estate; but that no deed of real estate shall be deemed an advancement, unless the same is expressed to be made for love or affection, or unless it be proved to be an advancement by some acknowledgment signed by the party receiving the same. N. H. Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 184, §§ 10-12.

In *New York*, if an advancement has been made to the child of an intestate, and this be equal or superior to the share of such child of the real and personal property of the deceased, he shall be excluded from any further share. But if such advancement be not equal to such share, such child and his descendants shall be entitled to receive so much only of the per-

sonal estate, and to inherit so much only of the real estate of the intestate as shall be sufficient to make all the shares of the children in such real and personal estate and advancement, equal. The value of the advancement is to be deemed to be that, if any, which has been acknowledged by the child in writing; otherwise it is to be estimated according to the worth of the property when given. The maintaining or educating, or the giving of money to a child, without a view to a portion or settlement in life, is not to be deemed an advancement. 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat. 4th ed. p. 160, §§ 23-26; and 5th ed. 1859, vol. 3, p. 42.

In *Alabama* and in *Arkansas*, the rule is the same. Ala. Code, 1867, §§ 1898-1903; Dig. Ark. Stat. ch. 56, § 15. In *Dacotah*, advancements are reckoned, if expressly made part of the portion. Civ. Code, 1866.

In *Ohio*, the statute respecting advancements is similar to the above, except that there is no clause specifying what shall not be considered an advancement. Ohio Rev. Stat. 1860, ch. 36, §§ 10-13.

In other States it is provided, in general terms, that advancements shall be taken into account in the distribution of estates; as in *Rhode Island*, Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 159; *Connecticut*, Gen. Stat. 1866, p. 414; *New Jersey*, Nixon, Dig. 1855, p. 195; *Pennsylvania*, Purdon, Dig. 1857, p. 454; *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 525; *North Carolina*, Rev. Code, 1854, p. 246; *Georgia*, Cobb, New Dig. 1851, vol. 1, p. 293; *Stats. Geo.* 1854, p. 41, No. 30; *Mississippi*, Rev. Code, 1857, p. 453; *Texas*, Oldham and White, Dig. 1859, p. 100; *Iowa*, Code, 1857, §§ 1419, 1420; Revision, 1860, §§ 2445, 2446; *Florida*, Thompson, Dig. p. 190; *Illinois*, 2 Comp. Stat. 1858, § 1200; *Kansas*, Gen. Laws, 1862, ch. 80, §§ 27, 28.

And so in *Kentucky*, *Missouri*, and *Indiana*, where it is also declared that the maintaining, educating, and giving money to a child or grandchild, with a view to a portion or settlement, shall not be considered an advancement; and also that the advancement shall be estimated according to the value of the property when given. 1 Ky. Rev. Stat., Stant. ed. 1860, 426; Ind. Rev. Stat. 280; Gen. Stat. Mo. 1866, c. 129, § 7.

In *Tennessee*, besides the general provision respecting advancements, it is provided that property settled on a child, under a power of trust, shall be collated and brought into contribution. Tenn. Code, 1858, §§ 2431-2435.

In *Maryland*, any child or issue of such, having received any real estate by way of advancement, may elect to come into partition with the other parceners, on bringing such advancement, or the value thereof, into hotchpot with the estate descended; but not otherwise, if there be another child or children unprovided for. Code, 1860, p. 334, § 81.

•ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

[•487]

An illegitimate child is heir to his mother and any maternal ancestor, and the lawful issue of an illegitimate person represents such person, and takes, by descent, any estate which the parent would have taken; In *Massachusetts*, Gen. Stat. 1860, ch. 91, § 2; *Indiana*, 1 Rev. Stat. 1852, p. 249;

[431]

Mississippi, Rev. Code, 1857, p. 453; *Texas*, Oldham & White, Dig. 1859, p. 101; *Vermont*, Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 56, § 4; *Alabama*, Code, 1867, § 1894.

If an illegitimate child dies intestate, without lawful issue, his estate descends to his mother in *Massachusetts*, Gen. Stat. ch. 91, § 3; *Vermont*, Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 56, § 4; *Indiana*, 1 Rev. Stat. 1852, 249; *Alabama*, Code, 1867, § 1894.

An illegitimate child, whose parents have intermarried, and whose father has acknowledged him as his child, is considered legitimate in *Massachusetts*, Gen. Stat. ch. 91, § 4; *Vermont*, Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 56, § 5; *Maryland* Code, 1860, p. 333; *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 523; *Kentucky*, 1 Rev. Stat. Stant. ed. 1860, 421; *Mississippi*, Rev. Code, 1857, p. 459; *Texas*, Oldham & White, Dig. 1849, p. 101; *Oregon*, Stat. 1855, p. 380; *Iowa*, Code, 1851, § 1416; *Indiana*, 1 Rev. Stat. 1852, p. 249; *Arkansas*, Dig. 1858, ch. 56, § 4; *Ohio*, Rev. Stat. 1860, ch. 36, § 16; *Missouri*, 1 Gen. Stat. ch. 129, § 10; *Illinois*, 2 Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 1200.

In *Vermont*, the father may also adopt such child by an instrument under seal, attested by three witnesses and acknowledged. Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 56, § 6.

In *New Hampshire*, it is declared that the heirs of a bastard, in the ascending and collateral lines, are the mother and her heirs, and that bastards and their issue are the heirs of the mother. When the mother of a bastard has deceased, her real estate descends in equal shares to her legitimate and illegitimate children and their issue. Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 184, §§ 4, 5, and if parents intermarry, and recognize as their own, children born before marriage, such children inherit equally with others, and are legitimate. Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 161, § 15.

In *Illinois*, illegitimate children inherit the estate of their mother; and if there be no such children, the estate descends according to the general rule of descents. 2 Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 1200.

Bastards are capable of inheriting or transmitting inheritance on the part of their mother, in like manner as if they had been lawfully begotten of such mother, in *Rhode Island*, Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 159, § 7; *Pennsylvania*, *Purd.* Dig. 1857, p. 1129; *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 523; *Kentucky*, 1 Rev. Stat., Stant. ed., 1860, p. 421; *Florida*, *Thomps.* Dig. p. 190; *Arkansas*, Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 56, § 3; *Iowa*, Revision, 1860, § 2441; *Missouri*, 1 Rev. Stat. ch. 54, § 9.

In *New York*, in case of the death, without descendants, of an intestate who shall have been illegitimate, the inheritance descends to his mother; if she be dead, to the relatives on the part of the mother, as if the intestate had been legitimate. But children and relatives who are illegitimate cannot inherit. By statute of 1855, it is provided that illegitimate children, in default of lawful issue, may inherit from their mother as if legitimate. 2 Rev. Stat. 4th ed. pp. 159, 160, §§ 14, 19; 5th ed. 1859, vol. 3, p. 43.

In *Maryland*, illegitimate children and the issue of such inherit from their mother or from each other, or from the descendants of each other, in like manner as if born in wedlock. Code, 1860, p. 334.

In *Kansas*, illegitimate children inherit from the mother, and the mother from the children. They also inherit from the father whenever they have been recognized by him as his children, but such recognition must have been general and notorious, or else in writing. Under such circumstances, if the recognition of relationship has been mutual, the father may inherit from his illegitimate child; but the mother and her heirs take precedence of the father and his heirs. Gen. Laws, 1862, ch. 80, §§ 23-26.

In *Ohio*, bastards are capable of inheriting or transmitting inheritance on the part of their mother, in like manner as if they had been born in lawful wedlock; and if the mother be dead, the estate descends to the relatives on the *part of the mother, as if the intestate had been legitimate. [*438] Rev. Stat. 1854, ch. 36, § 15.

In *North Carolina* and in *Oregon*, it is provided that illegitimate children shall inherit from their mother; but such child or descendant is not allowed to claim, as representing such mother, any part of the estate of her kindred, either lineal or collateral. Illegitimate children may inherit from each other; but when any such child dies without issue, his inheritance vests in the mother. N. Car. Rev. Code, 1854, p. 249; Oreg. Stat. 1855, p. 380.

In *Tennessee*, the estate of an illegitimate child dying intestate without issue, husband or wife, goes to his mother; and if there be no mother, then to his brothers and sisters by his mother, or their descendants. Code, 1858, § 2423.

In *Georgia*, illegitimate children may inherit from their mother, and from each other. If an illegitimate person dies intestate, leaving no widow or descendants, but leaving brothers or sisters of like illegitimate birth and born of the same mother, or descendants of such, they are entitled to inherit of such intestate as if they were all legitimate. If such intestate leaves no widow or descendants, and no brother or sister of illegitimate birth, or descendants of such, but shall leave brothers and sisters born of the mother of such intestate in lawful wedlock, or descendants of such, then such last-mentioned brothers and sisters and their descendants inherit the estate of such intestate, under the same rules and regulations as if they were in law the next of kin of such intestate. Furthermore, the widow and children of an illegitimate person inherit in the same manner as if such intestate were legitimate; and if there be no such widow or children, then the property descends to such persons of the maternal blood as would be entitled to the same, had such illegitimate person been legitimate. Stat. 1856, p. 227, No. 174; Laws, 1859, p. 36, No. 33; 1 Cobb, New Dig. p. 293.

In *Maine*, an illegitimate child is an heir of his mother and of a person who, in a writing signed in the presence of and attested by a competent witness, acknowledges himself to be his father, and inherits as if born in lawful wedlock. But he does not inherit as representing his father or mother, any part of the estate of their kindred, either lineal or collateral, unless, before his death, his parents intermarry and have other children, or his father acknowledges him as aforesaid, or adopts him into his family, and then he is deemed legitimate, and as such inherits from others, and they from him. If

an illegitimate child dies intestate without lawful issue, his estate descends to his mother, and if she has deceased, to her heirs at law, unless such child leaves a husband or widow, who then inherits an equal share with the mother or with her children. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 75, §§ 3, 4.

The statute now provides that illegitimate children are legitimized by the subsequent intermarriage of the parents. Acts, 1864.

In *Nebraska*, every illegitimate child is to be considered the heir of the person who shall, in writing, acknowledge himself its father, and in all cases is heir of the mother of such child. But he cannot claim from the parent's kindred, unless the parents intermarry and have other children during his lifetime. If a marriage be annulled by a previous marriage, and the second marriage was in good faith, children begotten before judgment succeed as legitimate offspring. Rev. Stat. 1866, pp. 62, 133.

So in *Dacotah*, where the mother and her kindred succeed to the child's property, and if the mother leave no husband or lawful children, her illegitimate children may succeed. Civil Code, 1866.

There are statutes quite similar to this in *California*, Wood, Dig. 1858, p. 424; *Wisconsin*, Rev. Stat. ch. 92, §§ 2-4; *Michigan*, 2 Comp. Laws, 1857, p. 860, ch. 91, §§ 2-4; *Minnesota*, Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 412.

POSTHUMOUS CHILDREN.

Posthumous children are considered as living at the death of the parent, in *Massachusetts*, Gen. Stat. ch. 81, § 12; *New York*, 2 Rev. Stat. 160, § 18; 5th ed. vol. 3, p. 43; *New Jersey*, Nix. Dig. 1855, p. 196; *Delaware*, Rev. Code, 1852, ch. 85, § 2; *Dacotah*, Civ. Code, 1866; *Maryland*, 1 Dors. Laws, p. 747; Code, 1860, p. 332; *Pennsylvania*, Purd. Dig. 1857, p. 454; *Kentucky*, Rev. Stat. 1852, p. 280; *Ohio*, Rev. Stat. 1860, ch. 36, § 19; *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 523; *North Carolina*, Rev. Code, 1854, p. 249; *Tennessee*, Code, 1858, p. 478, § 2424; *Indiana*, 1 Rev. Stat. ch. 52, p. 248; *Wisconsin*, Rev. Stat. 1858, ch. 92, § 12; *Illinois*, 2 Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 1200; *Minnesota*, Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 413; *Nebraska*, Rev. Stat. 1867, p. 64; *Vermont*, Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 49, § 25.

This provision is limited to the children of the intestate, in *Alabama*, Code, 1867, § 1893; *Arkansas*, Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 56, § 2; *Texas*, Oldham & White, Dig. 1858, p. 99; *Missouri*, 1 Gen. Stat. 1866, ch. 129, § 2.

The issue of marriages deemed null in law, or dissolved by a court, are nevertheless declared legitimate in *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 523; [*439] *Arkansas*, Dig. *Stat. 1858, ch. 56, § 5; *California*, Wood, Dig. 1858, p. 424; *Ohio*, Rev. Stat. 1854, ch. 36, § 16; *Missouri*, 1 Gen. Stat. 1866, ch. 129, § 11.

ALIENAGE.

Alienage of an ancestor is no bar to a party's deriving title by descent through him from the intestate, in *Virginia*, Code, 1849, p. 523, § 4; in *Kentucky*, 1 Rev. Stat., Stant. ed., 1860, 421; in *Florida*, Thomps. Dig. p. 190;

Arkansas, Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 56, § 6; *Texas*, Oldham & White, Dig. 1859, p. 100; *Missouri*, 1 Gen. Stat. 1866, ch. 129, § 8; *Massachusetts*, Gen. Stat. ch. 91, § 58.

In *Tennessee*, if the person entitled to the inheritance is an alien, and resident of the United States at the time of the intestate's death, and has declared, or shall, within one year of such time, declare his intention of becoming a citizen, he may succeed to the estate. Where there are kindred of equal degree, citizens of the United States are to be preferred to the exclusion of those who are not. Code, 1858, §§ 2427, 2428.

In *Alabama*, when the heir is alien, the next heir who is a citizen inherits. Code, 1867, § 1896.

CHAPTER II.

TITLE OTHER THAN BY GRANT.

- SECT. 1. Escheat.
- SECT. 2. Occupancy.
- SECT. 3. Prescription.
- SECT. 4. Accretion.
- SECT. 5. Abandonment.
- SECT. 6. Estoppel.
- SECT. 7. Possession and Limitation.

[*448]

*SECTION I.

ESCHEAT.

1. What is escheat, and how far it prevails.
2. Forfeiture for crime does not apply in this country.
3. How escheats are established and enforced.
4. When escheated lands vest in the State.
5. Of conveying escheated lands by a State.
6. When a State is estopped to claim land as an escheat.
7. How far escheats affect equitable estates.
8. Remainders may escheat.
9. State takes only estate of the deceased, by escheat.

1. AMONG the sources of title to lands mentioned by the English writers, are Escheat,¹ Forfeiture, Occupation, and Prescription, which, for reasons which will be obvious, need only be referred to in general terms, in a treatise upon American law. Escheat, in a feudal sense, prevailed in Maryland, and perhaps a few others of the Colonies, in their early history, but never since the Revolution. From being an incident of tenure under the feudal law, whereby, upon failure of heirs on the part

¹ "Eschaeta cometh of the French *escheoir cadere, excidere*, and signifieth in a legal sense any lands or other profits that fall to a lord within his manor by way of forfeiture or the death of his tenant dying without heir." Cowel, Interpret.

of a tenant, so that the duties belonging to the estate were not performed, it fell back into the hands of the lord, it has come to be a falling of the estate into the general property of the State, either because the tenant is an alien, or because he has died intestate, without lawful heirs to take his estate by succession.¹*

*2. It was shown in a former volume of this work, [*444] that, by the legislation of most of the States, alienage has ceased to be a disability for holding lands,² so that the dying intestate without heirs is now practically the only ground of escheat which is worth considering, for relations succeed, however distant, provided only they give evidence of their propinquity.³ In this case, as above stated, the property comes to the State. The English doctrine of forfeiture of lands to the State for crime or corruption of blood, is generally, if not universally, done away with in this country,⁴ and will therefore be no further noticed in this work.

3. Considered in this light, escheat of lands may be regarded as merely falling back into the common ownership of the State from which they were theoretically, originally derived, because the tenant did not see fit to dispose of them in his lifetime, and left no one who, in the eye of the law, has any claim to inherit them. But even in such a case, in most of the States, as well as at common law, there must be a process like a recovery of the lands by suit gone through with, before the land can properly be considered as belonging to the State. This process is called, in general terms, an "inquest of office," sometimes "office found," being a course of legal proceedings carried on in the name of the State, under a claim that the land has escheated for want of heirs. The form of this varies in different States, being regulated by statute.⁵

* NOTE.—Mr. Dane says escheat, upon feudal principles, never existed in the Colonies. He seems to have been in an error, at least in respect to Maryland. See 3 Dane, Abr. 140.

¹ Ante, vol. 1, pp. *24, *27; *Matthews v. Ward*, 10 Gill & J. 443; *Sewall v. Lee*, 9 Mass. 363; 3 Cruise, Dig. 397.

² Ante, vol. 1, pp. *49, *50.

³ *Kaimes*, Tracts, 110.

⁴ 3 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 398, note; 4 Kent, Com. 426, 428; U. S. Const. art. 3, § 3.

⁵ See *Sadler's case*, 4 Rep. 56; *Page's case*, 5 Rep. 52; *The People v. Cutting*,

4. In some States it would seem, that if, upon the death of the tenant without heirs, the lands are left vacant, they are considered as vesting at once in the State.¹ In others, [*445] such is *deemed to be the case if there shall have been a judgment in favor of the State, though no writ of possession shall have been executed.² But if the lands are in possession of a tenant, the proceedings must be carried on upon the same principle as between other demandants and tenants, and possession taken by service of a legal precept; and if the State fail to show that the owner died without heirs, it will fail to establish a claim, although the tenant does not claim under the deceased owner, or set up any title beyond possession.³ The same rule prevailed in Maryland before the Revolution, in case of the Lord Proprietary who had the benefit of escheats. He could only reinvest himself with an estate so as to convey it, by first making entry upon the land.⁴ And in the *People v. Folsom*, cited above, the principle is laid down as one of universal application, that neither by the civil nor common law, could the king take upon himself the possession of an estate as having escheated, until the fact is judicially ascertained by a proceeding in the nature of an inquest of office.⁵ And in such a proceeding it has been held, that the State must negative the presumption that the party dying left heirs, in order to prevail.⁶

5. Still, by the general power which the State has as sovereign, it is no objection to its making a legislative grant of escheated land for want of heirs, that this is done before proceedings actually had in office found.⁷

6. But a state may be estopped by its own grant and warranty, like an individual, even from claiming land as having

3 Johns. 1; *Commonwealth v. Hite*, 6 Leigh, 588; *The People v. Folsom*, 5 Cal. 373; *Puckett v. The State*, 1 Sneed, 355; 4 Kent, Com. 424, 425, note.

¹ *Den v. O'Hanlon*, 1 N. J. 582; *O'Hanlin v. Den*, 1 Spencer, 31; 4 Kent, Com. 424; *Montgomery v. Dorion*, 7 N. H. 475; *White v. White*, 2 Met. (Ky.) 185.

² *Commonwealth v. Hite*, 6 Leigh, 588.

³ *Commonwealth v. Hite*, 6 Leigh, 588; *People v. Cutting*, 3 Johns. 1; *Catham v. State*, 2 Head, 553.

⁴ *Kelly v. Greenfield*, 2 Harr. & M'H. 121.

⁵ *The People v. Folsom*, 5 Cal. 373; *Puckett v. The State*, 1 Sneed, 355.

⁶ *Hammond v. Inloes*, 4 Md. 138.

⁷ *Colgan v. McKeon*, 4 N. J. 566.

escheated where the claim is made on the ground of alienage. Thus, where the commonwealth granted lands to an alien who died leaving heirs, citizens and residents of France; to an inquest of office for recovering the lands, it was held, that the deed and warranty of the commonwealth was a bar, and that it could *not take advantage of the alienage [*446] of the heirs.¹ This right of escheat, where an owner died without heirs, was claimed by the Colonies of Massachusetts and Plymouth, as incident to the sovereignty which they exercised over the lands within their patents.²

7. While escheat was regarded as an incident of feudal tenure, it did not extend to the equitable estates of *cestui que trust*. And, by analogy, it is generally understood that if a *cestui que trust* dies intestate, without heirs, the trust fails and the trustee holds an absolute estate in the property free from the claim of any one.³ But it is settled by the courts of Maryland, and intimated by Judge Kent, in respect to New York, that such would not be the case under the statute of these States, and that if a *cestui que trust* should die without heirs, his equitable estate would escheat to the State.⁴

8. A vested remainder in fee, dependent on an estate for life, may escheat before the death of the tenant for life.⁵

9. The principle seems to be an universal one, that if land escheats to the State, the latter takes the title which the party dying had, and none other. It takes it, moreover, in the plight, and acquires it to the extent, to which the proprietor held it; ⁶ and an "escheat grant," as it is called, passes the estate just as the original grantee held it, with all privileges and appurtenances, and subject to all liens and incumbrances.⁷

¹ Commonwealth v. André, 3 Pick. 224.

² 3 Dane, Abr. 140.

³ Hill, Trust. 270; Matthews v. Ward, 10 Gill & J. 443; 4 Kent, Com. 426; ante, p. *185.

⁴ Matthews v. Ward, 10 Gill & J. 443; 4 Kent, Com. 426; Hill, Trust. 270, Whart. note; Wood v. Mather, 38 Barb. 479.

⁵ The People v. Conklin, 2 Hill, 67.

⁶ 4 Kent, Com. 427.

⁷ Casey v. Inloes, 1 Gill, 430.

[*447]

•SECTION II.

OCCUPANCY.

1. Of eminent domain.
2. In what cases estate by occupancy existed.

1. As the object of this chapter is to treat of the mode in which title to real property may be acquired by individuals, and of such titles as one may part with to another, rather than of the relations of the State to individuals in respect to the power which the former may exercise over the property and possession of the latter; it is not proposed to consider the right of Eminent Domain as a means of appropriating the lands of the citizen for public uses, such as highways and the like. Nor is it proposed to add to what has already been said, of acquiring an involuntary easement by one citizen in the lands of another, under what are called the Mill acts, or statutes authorizing a mill-owner, under certain circumstances, to occupy the land of another for the purposes of raising a pond of water to work a water-mill.

2. Passing over these, the mode of acquiring title which was once common, and which was nearest to the idea of deriving the right under which title was claimed from an original state of nature, was that by Occupancy. This word is here used in a technical sense, and does not extend to titles gained by possession or prescription. It was applied only to cases where one was tenant *per autre vie*, and the *cestui que vie* outlived him. The estate here was a freehold, and, therefore, did not go, like a term of years, to his personal representatives. But not being one of inheritance, it did not go to his heirs, nor had the grantor or lessor any right to enter until the *cestui que vie* died. And the consequence was, that no one had any legal right to the remnant of the estate, and whoever first occupied it, acquired such a title by possession that no one might displace or dispossess him. This was called a title by occupancy. It took two forms, one called a general, the other a special occupancy, according to the circumstances under which the tenant

entered and took possession. But the learning on this *subject has now become obsolete through legislation, [*448] both in England and this country, whereby such an interest as the tenant *per autre vie* leaves by dying before him, by whose life his estate is measured, descends or is distributed as real estate, or as a chattel interest, like his other property.¹

SECTION III.

PREScription AND LIMITATION.

1. Distinction between prescription and limitation.
2. How limitation operates on a title to an estate.
3. Changes in the period of prescription.
4. Prescription presumes a grant.
5. Effect on title of establishing a prescription.

1. Another mode, source or evidence of title, familiarly known to the law, is *Prescription*. Technically and properly, the term applies only to incorporeal hereditaments, and does not extend to land or corporeal property,² although Mr. Cruise has devoted an entire chapter to titles to land acquired by possession, under the head of Prescription. This he was led to do from the analogy between the rules as to limitation of time during which the enjoyment of either furnishes conclusive evidence of title, independent of any formal evidence of an original deed or grant. The difference, however, between them consists in this, that the common law fixes what length of enjoyment of an incorporeal hereditament, like a way, a water-course, and the like, shall be deemed sufficient evidence of an ownership of the right, while, as to the land, the period is fixed by statute and is called a limitation, beyond which no man may set up a title adverse to the presumed title of him who has been permitted for that length of time to enjoy uninterrupted possession of the same. The theory of prescription was, that the right claimed must have been enjoyed beyond the period of the memory of man, which, for a long time in England, went back to the time of

¹ See ante, vol. 1, pp. *93, *94; 2 Bl. Com. 258.

² Crabb, Real Prop. 1039; Ferris v. Brown, 3 Barb. 105.

Richard I. But, to obviate the necessity of such an impossible proof, it became customary to rely upon the *presumption* [*449] *of a deed having been given*, and of its having *been lost, after showing an enjoyment for a sufficient length of time.¹ The matter is regulated in England now by statute 3 and 4 William IV. ch. 71. And, in the United States, grants of incorporeal hereditaments are presumed, upon proof of an adverse enjoyment which has been exclusive and uninterrupted for twenty years, or the period of time fixed by the respective statutes of the several States, as the limitation in respect to lands themselves.² And in order to be adverse the possession must be under a claim of title.³

2. The statute of limitation, in respect to lands, operates as an extinguishment of the remedy of the one, though not as a gift of the estate to the other.⁴ Whereas the enjoyment of an incorporeal hereditament in the manner above mentioned, for the requisite period of time, raises a conclusive presumption of a grant or a right as the case may be, which is to be applied as a *presumptio juris et de jure*, wherever a right may be acquired, in any manner known to the law.⁵ But, in order that the enjoyment of an incorporeal hereditament should be the ground of anything more than a presumption of fact, as distinguished from a presumption *juris et de jure*, it must appear that all the requisites of a *prescription* apply to the particular case in question, namely, it must have been continued a sufficient length of time, adverse, under a claim of right, exclusive, continuous, and uninterrupted, and with the knowledge and acquiescence of the owner of the estate, in or over which, it is claimed, and while such owner was able, in law, to resist such enjoyment if not well founded.⁶

¹ 2 Greenl. Ev. §§ 538, 539; Burt. Real Prop. § 1039; Coolidge v. Learned, 8 Pick. 503.

² 2 Greenl. Ev. § 539; 3 Kent, Com. 442; Arnold v. Foot, 12 Wend. 330; Ford v. Whitlock, 27 Verm. 265; Hart v. Vose, 19 Wend. 365.

³ Adams v. Guice, 30 Miss. 397; Harvey v. Tyler, 2 Wall. U. S. 349; Kincheloe v. Tracewells, 11 Gratt. 605; Wallace v. Fletcher, 10 Fost. 446; Hale v. McLeod, 2 Met. (Ky.) 98; Parker v. Foote, 19 Wend. 309, 315; Washburn, Easements, 106, 2d ed.

⁴ Davenport v. Tyrrel, 1 W. Bl. 975.

⁵ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 539; Tyler v. Wilkinson, 4 Mason, 402.

⁶ Washburn, Easements, 86, 102, 122, 123, 2d ed.

3. This subject is examined and discussed by Wilde, J., in *Coolidge v. Learned*.¹ The limit of prescription was originally fixed to conform to the limitation of a writ of right. This period was fixed at sixty years, by the act of 32 Henry VIII. A corresponding change, however, in the period of prescription, was not adopted by the English courts. But the necessity of some limitation was supplied, by allowing a jury to presume a grant after a long period of enjoyment of an incorporeal right affecting the lands of another, and twenty years was the time fixed, in analogy with the rule of law as to the limitation of a possessory action to recover the land itself.² The term of time requisite to raise a right by prescription, therefore, becomes *unimportant in the practical working of the [*450] modern rule of presumption as to a grant. But still there is in respect to incorporeal hereditaments, a title by prescription. In Massachusetts, when *Coolidge v. Learned* was decided, sixty years seems to have been assumed as the period of such prescription. But since that time, it has been reduced to twenty years, in analogy with the limitation of all real actions.³ It had, in the mean time, been reduced from sixty to forty years, by applying the same analogy, in the cases of *Melvin v. Whiting*,⁴ and *Kent v. Waite*.⁵ In Vermont, the period of prescription for an incorporeal hereditament is fifteen years, in analogy to the statute of limitation.⁶ In Alabama, the time of prescription is twenty years.⁷ In Pennsylvania, it is twenty-one years.⁸

4. So far as the several States have regulated the period of prescription by statute, the reader is referred to an abstract of these at the close of the present chapter.⁹ It is, therefore, only

¹ *Coolidge v. Learned*, 8 Pick. 508.

² *Stoddard v. Powell*, 1 Stew. (Ala.) 287; *Sims v. Meacham*, 2 Bail. 101; *Bolivar Mg. Co. v. Neponset Mg. Co.* 16 Pick. 247; *Pue v. Pue*, 4 Md. Ch. Dec. 386; *Watkins v. Peck*, 13 N. H. 360.

³ *Dana v. Valentine*, 5 Met. 14; *Luther v. Winnisimmet Co.* 9 Cush. 171.

⁴ *Melvin v. Whiting*, 10 Pick. 295.

⁵ *Kent v. Waite*, 10 Pick. 135, 142.

⁶ *Shumway v. Simons*, 1 Verm. 53; *Arbuckle v. Ward*, 29 Verm. 43.

⁷ *Stein v. Burden*, 24 Ala. 130.

⁸ *Okeson v. Patterson*, 29 Penn. St. 22.

⁹ For the extent to which different States apply the rules of statute limitations to prescriptions, especially where the estate against which it is claimed is, during a

necessary to add, that the theory upon which a title by prescription vests, is that it presupposes a *grant*, without requiring any further evidence of its having been made than the requisite term of enjoyment, and where the extent of the use is the evidence of the extent of the grant.¹ The doctrine of presuming grants was originally adopted for the purpose of quieting titles, and giving effect to long-continued possessions. Until a comparatively recent period, no deed could be pleaded without a *profert*. But when grants came to be presumed from long-continued possession and enjoyment, it was held that *profert* might be dispensed with, on suggestion that the deed was lost by time and accident.²

5. When established by the requisite proof, prescription seems to form a good and valid title in itself, and does not simply raise a presumption in favor of the party in enjoyment of the incorporeal right thereby claimed.³ For the nature of easements and the mode of acquiring and losing them, [*451] the reader is referred to what is said in the present volume,⁴ upon that subject, as it seemed unnecessary to pursue the subject of prescription in this connection further than to explain it as one of the modes of acquiring or establishing title to interests in lands.

part of the time, in the hands of a minor heir, reference may be had to the cases collected on p. *45, ante, *et seq.*

¹ *Charles River Bridge Co. v. Warren Bridge Co.*, by *Morton, J.*, 7 Pick. 344, 449.

² *Valentine v. Piper*, 22 Pick. 93; *Melvin v. Locks, &c.* 17 Pick. 255; *Eman v. Turnbull*, 2 Johns. 322; *Edson v. Munsell*, 10 Allen, 568; *Webb v. Bird*, 13 C. B. N. S. 843; *Wash. Ease.* 101, 2d ed.

³ *Tyler v. Wilkinson*, 4 Mason, 397; 3 Kent, Com. 445; *Melvin v. Whiting*, 10 Pick. 295, 298; *Okeson v. Patterson*, 29 Penn. St. 26. But see *Watkins v. Peck*, 13 N. H. 377, where *Parker, Ch. J.*, says, "no grant can be presumed from the adverse use of an easement in the land of another for the term of twenty years, where the owner of the land was at the expiration of the twenty years, and long before, incapable of making a grant, whether from infancy or insanity."

⁴ Ante, p. *27, *et seq.*

SECTION IV.

ACCRETION.

1. In what cases the doctrine of accretion arises.
 - 1a. Same subject.
2. Of avulsion as distinguished from alluvion.
3. Alluvion considered as an appurtenant of land.

1. Another mode of acquiring title to realty is where portions of the soil of real estate are added by gradual deposition, through the operation of natural causes, to that already in possession of the owner.¹ And this title is called title by *accretion*. Thus kelp and other marine plants when detached from the bottom of the sea and thrown on the shore or beach, become vested in the owner of the soil. But to become so they must be cast upon the shore, and rest there, so as to become attached to the soil.² Such is the case where land has been formed upon and united with the shore of the sea or of a river, by the gradual formation of what is called *alluvion*, through the action of the water in washing it against the land forming such shore, and depositing it thereon. Sometimes the operation of streams of water flowing between lands of adjacent owners, is to wash away the soil on one side and deposit it upon the other. Sometimes, by the ordinary operation of natural laws, islands are formed in the sea which become capable of occupation. In other cases they are formed in rivers between the adjacent banks thereof. And questions of considerable nicety have thereby been raised, as to the respective rights of individuals and the public to the occupation of such formations. The rules which ordinarily govern such cases, seem to be these. If islands are formed in the sea, or, as a general proposition in *navigable* rivers, they belong to the sovereign or the State. But alluvion becomes, as fast as formed, the property of the owner of the land upon which it forms, and the same rule applies to islands formed in unnavigable streams, or those in which the tide does not ebb and flow. If one owns a narrow strip along

¹ Bracton, 9, Coxe ed.; Güterbock, Bract. 104.

² Anthony v. Gifford, 2 Allen, 550; Emans v. Turnbull, 2 Johns. 322.

a river cut off from the body of the original tract, the alluvion belongs to such narrow strip to which it is attached.¹

[*452] In respect to lands thus situated, *the thread or centre line of the stream forms the dividing line between the different owners upon the one side and the other of such stream, and whether islands formed in such streams belong to one or the other proprietor, or in part to one and in part to the other, depends upon their situation in relation to this line. If it forms upon both sides of such line what would have been the original *filum aquæ* of such stream, will divide to each owner his several share of such island. It often happens, by the gradual wearing away of the land upon one side, and a deposition of the soil upon the other, that this thread of the stream undergoes a constant process of change in one direction or the other, since it is the thread, for the time being, and not the one existing at the time of the adjacent owners acquire their titles, which forms the boundary line between their estates. If, however, by some sudden convulsion of nature, or by some unusual change in the course of a stream by an extraordinary flood, the effect is to leave a body of the land of one annexed to that of the other without any intervening current of water, this rule, as to the thread of the stream forming the boundary between them, ceases to apply, and the former dividing line continues, although one of the proprietors may thereby include the whole stream within his own limits.²

1 a. The doctrine above stated was applied to the accretion which formed along the *Quai* at New Orleans, upon the bank of the Mississippi, which had been dedicated to public use. The alluvion was held to have become a part of the public quay.³ But the case of *Trustees, &c. v. Dickinson*, presents questions of more difficulty, and some of which can hardly be

¹ *Sanlet v. Shepherd*, 4 Wall. U. S. 508; *Banks v. Ogden*, 2 Wall. U. S. 57, 69.

² 2 Sharsw. Bl. Com. 261 n.; Walk. Am. Law, 319; *Ingraham v. Wilkinson*, 4 Pick. 268; 3 Kent, Com. 428; *Deerfield v. Arms*, 17 Pick. 41, where the whole subject is learnedly examined, and a rule prescribed for dividing alluvion, between adjacent riparian proprietors; *Woodbury v. Short*, 17 Verm. 387; Hargr. Law Tracts, 5; Woolrych, Laws of Water, 26, 37; Vinnius, Comm. Lib. 2 tit. 1, § 20, "*De Alluvione*;" *King v. Yarborough*, 3 B. & C. 91, 107; Hale, *de Jure Maris*, as given in 6 Cow. 537; *Fleta*, B. 3, ch. 2, § 6.

³ *New Orleans v. United States*, 10 Peters, 717.

said yet to be settled. It was the case of a parcel of land which had formed in what was once the bed of Connecticut River, in consequence of a change in the current of the stream. The plaintiffs owned land on the east side of the river, across which the stream gradually formed a channel so as to cut off a point of their land, forming it into an island, which, as far as it extended, formed the west bank of the stream. In the mean time, land formed at points in the old bed of the stream between this island and the former west bank of the stream. The question was, whose was the land thus gradually formed in the old bed of the stream. It was held, that each proprietor originally owned to the thread of the river, and, as such, became entitled to all accessions. If an island forms on one side of the thread of the stream, it will wholly belong to him who owns the land on which it formed. If it forms partly on each side of the original thread, that will divide its ownership. This thread may be changed towards one side or the other of the stream by gradual accretion upon the one shore or the other, forming a new shore-line. And if the opposite bank be also worn away, the thread will change accordingly. When an island forms in the bed of the stream, so that the water flows upon both sides of it, it becomes two streams in that place, each having a *filum aquæ*. And it is suggested, that as this island acquires by occupation the properties of land, if another island were to form between it and the main land, the question of ownership thereof would depend upon where the new *filum aquæ* would be in respect to it. If an island in a stream be wholly washed away, the *filum aquæ* may run along where there had been this solid ground. Where the stream in its change cuts off a part of the land upon one side of the river, and leaves it upon the opposite side of the stream, the original owner of that land retains the property in it. And if the old bed of the stream between that and its former opposite bank becomes dry land, it will belong to the respective owners as before, by a division formed by the old *filum aquæ* of such bed. Above a line drawn across the stream at the head of this island, the original *filum aquæ* of the stream remains as it was before. And if alluvion forms upon the upper part of this island, in the up-stream direction,

the ownership of that alluvion would be governed by the still existing *filum aquæ*. If upon both sides, each would own accordingly, if wholly upon one side or the other, the one or the other owner would be entitled to it in severalty. The *filum aquæ* is the middle line between the shores, irrespective of the depth of the channel, taking it in the natural and ordinary stage of water, at its medium height, neither swollen by freshets nor shrunk by drought. In dividing the lands laid bare in the old bed, in the case supposed, among the several owners upon the original shore, on either side, each would have a line on the original *filum aquæ*, proportioned to the line of his land upon the shore before the river was filled up, as defined in the case of *Deerfield v. Arms*.¹ In respect to alluvion formed upon the seashore, the "shore," in the first place, is the space between high and low water marks, occasioned by the ebb and flood of the tide. And the standard or test of this is, "the line of the medium high tide between the spring and the neaps"; whereas, by the civil law, "*est autem littus maris quantum hybernus fluctus maximus excurrit.*"² In respect to land along the shore gained by gradual accretion, as distinguished from some sudden acquisition, it belongs to the owner of the land upon which it forms. When the sea retreats suddenly, and leaves a tract of land uncovered, the same belongs to the crown or the State.³ The test of what is gradual, as distinguished from what is sudden, seems to be that, though witnesses are able to perceive, from time to time, that the land has encroached upon the sea line, it is enough, if it was done so that they could not perceive the progress at the time it was being made. Nor does it make any difference in the rights of the land-owner, that the accretion upon his land is the result of artificial causes, and not wholly from natural ones. The consequence is, the boundary line of an owner's land bordering upon the sea, varies with the gradual increase or diminution of quantity by the addition of alluvion, or by the wasting

¹ *Trustees, &c. v. Dickenson*, 9 Cush. 544; *Deerfield v. Arms*, 17 Pick. 41. See Dig. 41, 1; 56, 1, and 64, 3; *Primm v. Walker*, 38 Mo. 99.

² *Attorney-General v. Chambers*, 4 De G., M. & G. 206, 216, 218; s. c. 4 De G. & J. 58; *Hargrave, Tracts*, 25; *Scrutton v. Brown*, 4 B. & C. 495.

³ *Emans v. Turnbull*, 2 Johns. 322.

away before the action of the water, in its encroachments upon the land, the line of the shore varying accordingly.¹

2. Cases sometimes occur, where considerable quantities of soil are by the sudden action of water taken from the land of one and deposited upon or annexed to the land of another. The difference between *avulsion*, as the latter process is called, and *alluvion*, consists in the one being done by imperceptible loss from the land of one, and increment to that of the other, and in the other, its being done suddenly to an extent which can be ascertained and measured. In the case of *avulsion*, the soil still belongs to the first owner, unless he shall have suffered it to remain in its new position, until [*453] it cements and coalesces with the soil of the second owner, in which case the property in the soil will be changed, and no right to reclaim it remain.²

3. This right to alluvion is considered as an interest appurtenant to the principal land, and belonging, in the nature of an incident, to the ownership of that, rather than as something acquired by prescription or possession, in the ordinary legal sense of those terms. And the right to land thus added to the former proprietorship, is termed a title by accretion.³

¹ *Attorney-General v. Chambers*, 4 De G. & J. 55, 69, 70; *King v. Yarborough*, 1 Dow & C. 178, 186, 189; s. c. 3 B. & C. 91, 105, 106; *Scrutton v. Brown*, 4 B. & C. 485, 498; *In re Hull & Selby Railway*, 5 M. & W. 328.

² *Woodbury v. Short*, 17 Verm. 387; *Woolrych*, Law of Waters, 28, 37; *Ang. Wat. Cour.* § 60; *Institute*, B. 2, tit. 1, § 21, and *Vinnius*, Comm. on the same; *Fleta*, B. 3, c. 2, § 6. The test given by the *Institute* and *Fleta*, of what would be a sufficient annexation to the land of another, to deprive the first land-owner of his property in the soil, is the suffering trees to take root and spring up in the soil in its new locality. But *Vinnius* does not consider this the only test, but to the claim of the original owner, "*objici tamen ei posse, quod partem avulsam, cum posset, non vindicaverit, sed tamdiu passus sit eam haerere fundo alieno, ut tandem cum eo coaluerit et unum facta sit, ut ipse quodammodo eam alienasse videatur*," which is substantially the same as the above text. See *Bracton*, 9 a; also *Dikes v. Miller*, 24 Tex. 424, 425; *Hawkins v. Barney*, 5 Peters, 467.

³ *Municipality v. Orleans Cotton Press*, 18 La. 122; *Banks v. Ogden*, 2 Wall. U. S. 69; *Saulet v. Shepherd*, 4 Wall. U. S. 508.

SECTION V.

ABANDONMENT.

1. Doctrine of loss of title by abandonment stated.
2. Instances where the doctrine applies.
- 3 a. Effect of abandoning adverse possession on title.
3. No title abandoned by parol agreement.
4. No abandonment of title except by effect of limitation.
5. Abandonment by act operating as an estoppel.
6. Confirmation, effect of.

1. In connection with the subject of acquiring title by prescription, is to be considered the loss of title by *abandonment*. This implies some act done, and does not depend upon any presumption of the execution of an instrument of release having been made, which, from lapse of time, has been lost. The doctrine of abandonment is usually applied to incorporeal hereditaments, though the dicta of judges, in a few instances, have indicated an opinion that abandonment might be effectual in parting with or losing title to land itself. In *Holmes v. Railroad, &c.*, a case in the Ohio circuit of the United States Court, McLean, J., used language which, though not called for by the facts in the case, in the broad sense of the [*454] terms employed, *might lead one to suppose that title to land might be lost by mere abandonment, independent of any adverse possession continued till the claim of the original owner was barred by the statute of limitations: "It is a well-known principle of law that every owner of property, whether personal or real, may abandon it. In *Corning v. Gould*,¹ it is observed, that a man shall be held to intend what necessarily results from his own acts. Consequently, when property is abandoned under such circumstances as to leave no doubt of the fact, no one who has taken possession of it can be required to relinquish it. Whether there be an abandonment is a question of fact to be determined by the circumstances of the case. And when this is done, the right is extin-

¹ *Corning v. Gould*, 16 Wend. 543.

guished.”¹ He cites several cases in connection with these propositions in his text, which, so far as they bear upon the subject, seem to fall short of sustaining the doctrine he maintains, so far as it applies to land itself, and only extend to equitable rights and easements or servitudes. A few of these will be noticed, as they serve to illustrate the doctrine of abandonment when applied to easements or servitudes and equitable interests in lands. Of the latter character, was *Picket v. Dowdall*, where one Crap had taken a warrant of land and had it surveyed, and thereby had acquired a right to demand a deed of it upon entering into certain agreements as to rents, &c. He neglected to take this step for several years, and the proprietors of the land sold and conveyed it to a stranger. The language of the judge upon the subject was, “I think the *abandonment* of Crap is fully proved. *It is true that legal rights once vested must be legally divested*, but equitable rights may be lost by dereliction.”²

2. In the case of *Taylor v. Hampton*, the right was that of one man to flow the land of another for the working a mill, where the owner of the mill had taken it down, opened the gates and drawn down the water, and rebuilt the mill further up stream, leaving the land between the two sites unflowed.

*He afterwards, in about nine years, undertook to re- [*455] build on the original site, and it was held he had abandoned the right by what he had done. The court speaks of the loss of such an easement “by abandonment of that part of the estate which owes the servitude,” and as illustrations of what are such acts of abandonment as operate to discharge the servitude, without the necessity of any formal release, mentions a removal of the gates and a ceasing to flow a pond of water for a mill; the erection, by the owner, of a wall so as to obstruct the light and air from his own window; or his building a house across a private way which leads from the street across his own land and over the land of another, whereby its original use was destroyed. Any of these or similar acts may operate as an abandonment and total loss of the easement, or a suspension thereof, as the case may be, and a consequent loss for the

¹ *Holmes v. Railroad*, 8 Am. Law Reg. 716, 724.

² *Picket v. Dowdall*, 2 Wash. 107; *Dikes v. Miller*, 24 Tex. 424, and cases cited.

time being, of the right to enjoy it.¹ A mere non-user of a way for a certain length of time, is not an abandonment of a right to enjoy it.² The case of *Corning v. Gould*, cited in a former part of this work, was that of a way for the use of two adjacent owners, and lying along the division line between them. One party having built upon his half of the way, which was followed by an obstructing of the other half by the other owner, the court held, that this was an abandonment of the easement, the act of the first having been assented to by the owner of the other portion of the way. In commenting upon the law of the case, the court say, "even a rent raised by deed may be extinguished in this way by mutual consent. The lessor enters and expels the tenant; if he does not choose to re-enter, the rent is gone, though if he return, it is suspended only during the expulsion."³ A similar doctrine of abandonment of an easement without deed, by the act of an owner exchanging one way, for instance, for another, is sustained in the case of *Pope v. Devereux*.⁴ In the case of *Kirk v. King*, there was [*456] an "abandonment of a beneficial use raised in favor of an unincorporated association, by their forbearing to exercise it for a period of years. The deed, in that case, was made to "the employees of a school," an association, but not an incorporated body. The school had been discontinued seven years when the owner entered and occupied the land. It was held, that the conveyance raised a use, but conveyed no legal title to the association for want of an ascertained grantee. It was held, also, that the non-user was an abandonment of this use, on the part of the association. "This was, certainly, enough," say the court, "to raise a legal presumption of abandonment." "It would, certainly, have constituted an abandonment of a location, under the land laws which this deed very much resembles."⁵

2 a. The doctrine of losing title by abandonment, has been applied to cases of *prima facie* title by long-continued adverse

¹ *Taylor v. Hampton*, 4 M'Cord, 96.

² *Ward v. Ward*, 14 Eng. L. & Eq. 414.

³ *Corning v. Gould*, 16 Wend. 531; ante, p. *59.

⁴ *Pope v. Devereux*, 5 Gray, 409. See this case considered ante, p. *57.

⁵ *Kirk v. King*, 3 Penn. St. 441.

possession. Thus in Georgia, where seven years is the period of limitation, it has been held, that if, after a possession for that length of time, a tenant abandons the premises, it will be treated as an admission that he had not been holding adversely to the true owner, but in subordination to his title.¹ And this is in accordance with the doctrine of the court of Massachusetts, who held, that where a party had occupied land up to a certain fence, for more than thirty years, it was competent, in an action involving the title to the premises, to show the acts and declarations of the tenant, made after thirty years, in order to show the motives and views of the tenant as to the holding during the thirty years.² But it is not easy wholly to reconcile this with the opinion of the court in Maine, where it was held, that "an open, notorious, exclusive, adverse possession for twenty years, would operate to convey a complete title to the plaintiffs, as much so as any written conveyance. And such title is not only an interest in the land, but it is one of the highest character, the absolute dominion over it, and the appropriate mode of conveying it, is by deed. No doubt a disseisor may abandon the land, or surrender his possession by parol to the disseisee *at any time before his disseisin has ripened into a title*, and thus put an entire end to his claim. His declarations are admissible in evidence to show the character of his seisin, whether he holds adversely or in subordination to the legal title. But the title obtained by disseisin, so long continued as to take away the right of entry, and bar an action for the land by limitation, cannot be conveyed by a parol abandonment or relinquishment, it must be transferred by deed."³ The only way of reconciling the former with the latter case, which seems to be in accordance with the modern notion of the effect of the statute of limitations, is to suppose the possession of the tenant was equivocal in its character, and his acts were merely evidence to fix what its true character had been, and to negative the presumption of its having been adverse. So that it does not go to sustain the doctrine that a title once obtained, though

¹ Vickery v. Benson, 26 Ga. 589.

² Church v. Burghardt, 8 Pick. 327.

³ School District, &c. v. Benson, 31 Me. 381, 385. See Brown v. Cockerell, 33 Ala. 46.

by disseisin, can be lost by a mere act of abandonment, though accompanied by a declaration to that effect. In one other case the court speak of a party *abandoning* land for so long a time as to preclude him from recovering it in ejectment.¹ And the same is cited with approbation in the Court of Errors in New York.² But the question in the case was one of boundary of adjoining lands which had been divided by a deed of partition, and it was admitted, that if the land claimed did not belong to one it did to the other, and that if it was not in the possession of the one it was in that of the other.

3. The law as stated by Wilde, J., is undoubtedly sound, "that a parol agreement, not in writing, is valid so as to pass any title to lands, cannot be maintained under any circumstances."³ If this is to be qualified, it is in the manner stated in *Allen v. Parish*, that "parol evidence is not sufficient to create a title to real estate or to transfer a title, but it is sometimes proper and necessary to strengthen or explain transactions from which either the existence or the transfer of titles may be inferred."⁴ And Wilde, J., in the case above cited, adds, "it may, perhaps, under certain circumstances, operate as an estoppel according to some of the decisions in the New York cases."

4. So, where there was an abandonment by one owner of land to another, as by a voluntary partition by parol, and each yielding possession of a part to the other, and the latter continuing to occupy long enough to give him a title by *limitation*, had his entry been tortious and his possession adverse, such abandonment and possession were held to be equivalent to a legal ouster by the tenant, and an adverse holding of possession as to the original owner.⁵ And the same has been held to be the effect where one sold another land by parol, and [*457] the bargainee *entered and occupied the same as his own, claiming title thereto for the period of time which operates as a bar by the statute of limitations, although the owner originally gave up possession to the tenant voluntarily.⁶

¹ *Jackson v. Bowen*, 1 Caines, 358, 362.

² *Adams v. Rockwell*, per Mason, senator, 16 Wend. 307.

³ *Tolman v. Sparhawk*, 5 Met. 476, 477.

⁴ *Allen v. Parish*, 3 Ohio, 107.

⁵ *Gregg v. Blackmore*, 10 Watts, 192.

⁶ *Sumner v. Stevens*, 6 Met. 337; *Barker v. Salmon*, 2 Met. 32.

But it was the length of possession as owner, and not the mere act of abandonment, or giving of the possession originally, that operated to give title to the tenant. And the doctrine, as applicable to title gained by disseisin, is thus stated by Wells J., in *School District, &c. v. Benson*: "No doubt a disseisor may abandon the land, or surrender his possession by parol to the disseisee at any time before his disseisin has ripened into a title, and thus put an entire end to his claim." "But the title gained by a disseisin, so long continued as to take away the right of entry and bar an action for the land by limitation, cannot be conveyed by parol abandonment or relinquishment, it must be transferred by deed. One having such title may go out of possession, declaring he abandons it to the former owner, and intending never again to make any claim to the land; and so may the person who holds an undisputed title by deed, but the law does not preclude them from reclaiming what they have abandoned in a manner not legally binding on them."¹

5. In one of the cases cited by McLean, J., in the case above referred to, the court say, by way of illustration: "If a man stands by and sees another build on his own premises, his right is gone." This doctrine he classes under the head of estoppel *in pais*, and cites *Welland Canal v. Hathaway*.² It is probably, therefore, not too strong a conclusion to assert, that in no case can a man lose his title to a freehold in land by any act or oral declaration of abandonment, unless it comes within the category of estoppel, or is followed by such a possession by the person claiming title thereto in his stead, as brings the case within the statute of limitations. It was with a view to this conclusion that several of the cases above mentioned have been cited, to show that it was not the abandonment by the original owner *in favor of another that gave the title, but the [*458] possession by the latter being continued the requisite length of time to allow the statute of limitation to take effect. The doctrine of abandonment was considered by the court of California, in a case where one, who held a deed of land, orally bargained it to another, who entered and made improvements upon it, and then sold it to the tenant, who entered and oc-

¹ *School District v. Benson*, 31 Me. 381.

² *Welland Canal v. Hathaway*, 8 Wend. 480; *Corning v. Gould*, 16 Wend. 545.
VOL. III. 5

cupied the premises. No title was traced from the United States, to whom it originally belonged. The court below held, that the party first above mentioned, by transferring his possession to another, had *abandoned* his interest in the premises, and could not claim them again. But the court above denied that there could be such a thing as an abandonment in favor of a particular individual, or for a consideration. Such an act would be a gift or sale. Whereas, an abandonment is the relinquishment of a right, — the giving up of something to which one is entitled. And to constitute an act of abandonment, it must be done without an intention or desire that any other particular person should thereby acquire it. If, therefore, a tenant could abandon his title to the premises, he could not do it by bargaining it away to another.¹ In a case in Vermont, the court, as a court of equity, seem to be disposed to treat the act of a grantee as an abandonment of title, in a case where, by an agreement contemporaneous with the deed but not embraced in it, the grantee was to carry on the estate for the grantor, but instead of doing so, went away and refused to execute the agreement.² Under the Spanish law while it prevailed in some parts of what are now the United States, the doctrine of abandonment seems to have been recognized and acted upon. But to constitute it required that the owner should actually leave the land with an intention that it should no longer be his. If he do quit possession, but still retains the property in the premises in his mind, no one would have a right to enter upon them, and it would not amount to an abandonment.³

6. A single word may be added upon the subject of *confirmation*. *Qui confirmat nihil dat*. It may make good a voidable or defeasable title, but cannot operate upon, or in aid of, an estate which is void in law, except only where it is the act of the sovereign.⁴

¹ Stephens v. Mansfield, 11 Cal. 363; Dikes v. Miller, 24 Tex. 423; Richardson v. McNulty, 24 Cal. 344.

² Tracy v. Hutchins, 36 Verm. 237.

³ Clark v. Hammerle, 36 Mo. 639.

⁴ Branham v. Mayor, &c. 24 Cal. 605; Strother v. Lucas, 12 Peters, 454; Blessing v. House, 3 G. & John. 290. See Fenwick v. Gill, 38 Mo. 526; Com. Dig. Confirmation, D. 1; Choteau v. Eckhart, 2 How. U. S. 344.

SECTION VI.

ESTOPPEL.

1. What a title by estoppel is.
2. Upon what estoppels are based.
3. How estoppels operate upon titles to estates.
4. Two classes of estoppels.
5. Estoppels *in pais* rare at law.
- 6, 7. Instances where the doctrine has been applied.
- 8, 9. Cases involving discussion of doctrine of estoppel.
- 9 a. In what cases and how far estoppels *in pais* are applied.
- 9 b. How far fraud is essential to an estoppel.
- 9 c. How far fixing lines and fences works an estoppel.
10. One entering under another may not dispute his title.
11. Estoppels by deed.
12. Indentures may always, and deed poll often, work estoppels.
13. Effect of accepting a deed, as an estoppel.
14. What forms of conveyance work estoppels.
15. Deeds of release estop only as to present title.
16. Same rule prevails as to deeds of grant.
17. No title not *in esse* passes except by warranty.
18. No deeds under the statute of uses estop as to future titles.
19. Releases, &c. operate to estop as to existing titles.
20. Grantor estopped to deny that he had any interest.
21. Grantee not estopped to deny that grantor had title.
22. Plaintiff in ejectment estopped if defendant claims under his deed.
23. Distinction between estoppel as evidence, and in point of estate.
24. Estoppels by recitals in deeds.
25. Grantor estopped to deny admissions in his deed.
26. One tracing title through a deed estopped by its recitals.
27. Party estopped by admission of a fact, made to influence another.
28. Illustrations of the applications of this doctrine.
29. A recital in a will estops those claiming under it.
30. *Douglas v. Scott*,—Illustrating estoppels.
31. Grantor estopped to deny that he had any title.
32. One estopped to impeach a title gained by his own assent.
- 33, 34. Recitals do not estop if the deed be inoperative.
35. Of estoppel as to title by deed with warranty.
36. Cases where releases do and do not work estoppel.
37. Deeds, with warranty, bind a future acquired title.
38. Such warranty may be general or special.

- 39. Covenants of warranty to work estoppels must run with the land.
- 39 a. Warrantor may disavow his covenantee.
- 40. Effect of covenants, limited by the premises granted.
- 41. A deed must be good to give validity to its covenants.
- 42. Covenant by a guardian bars a personal title.
- 43. *Femes Covert* estopped by conveyances with warranty.
- 43 a. Same subject.
- 44. Estoppels apply to leases for years.
- 45. If lessor has any estate, his warranty does not estop him.
- 46. Effect of warranty where grantor's conveyance is or is not rightful.
- 47. Lessee bound by accepting title from a stranger.
- 48. How far estoppels extend, and who are bound by them.
- 49. Who are bound as privy in estate by an estoppel.
- 50. A deed with warranty bars the second grantee's after-acquired title.
- 51. Any one claiming under another who is estopped, is so himself.
- 52. Estoppel by arbitrament and award as to title.
- 53. How far estoppel is a common-law doctrine.

1. Title by estoppel is where equity, and, in some cases, the law, in order to accomplish the purposes of justice which cannot be otherwise reached, draws certain conclusions from the acts of one party in favor of another, in respect to the ownership of lands, which it does not allow the first to controvert or deny. Estoppels differ from evidence, in that the former are received as conclusive, and preclude all inquiry as to the true merits of the title, while the latter is merely the medium of establishing facts which do exist or have existed.¹ An estoppel against an estoppel sets the matter at large, so that a warranty opposed to a warranty leaves the matter as if none had been made.²

2. The learning of estoppels is founded as a general principle on the idea that a man shall not defeat his own act, or deny its validity to the prejudice of another. If a man of the name of John prepare and sign a deed as William, he shall not aver that his name is not William, in order to avoid it.³ So where a man in his deed recites particular facts, these facts become evidence against him, and he will not be at liberty to

¹ 1 Prest. Abst. 421; Crabb, Real Prop. 1046; Co. Lit. 352 a, and note 306; Welland Canal v. Hathaway, 8 Wend. 480; Shep. Touch. Prest. ed. 53.

² Kimball v. Schoff, 40 N. H. 197.

³ Post, ch. 4, § 1, pl. 27.

deny the truth of his statement. One who makes a feoffment cannot aver that his feoffee has not a seisin, or set up a title acquired subsequent to the feoffment.¹

3. It is not, however, that an estoppel gives an estate, or divests another of an estate or interest in lands. It merely binds the interest by a conclusion which precludes the parties, between whom it is made to operate, from asserting or denying *the state of the title.² Or, in the language of [*459] another, "a title is rather presumed than acquired by estoppel, inasmuch as a person is concluded by his own act from disputing the title of another."³ But as estoppels must be mutual, they do not apply in favor of infants or *femes covert*,⁴ nor is there any estoppel *in pais* against *femes covert*.⁵ And the same is true of infants, for to be binding on one part, it must bind the other also.⁶

4. Estoppels divide themselves into those by act, or *in pais*, and those by deed, and may be so considered in their bearing upon the question of title to lands.

5. The cases where a party is estopped in equity to assert his claim to equitable interests in lands by anything short of a deed, are not infrequent. But it is very rare that that is allowed at law, and, it is believed, in those cases only, where one man has knowingly induced another to act by the expenditure of moneys in improvements upon lands, as if he had a rightful title to the same, and adequate justice cannot be done by compensation in money. Wilde, J., states the rule, hypothetically, in all cases, and concludes that it cannot be done even where improvements have been made, if the one making

¹ 2 Prest. Abst. 407, 408; *Sinclair v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 586, by *Jones*, Ch.; *Douglas v. Scott*, 5 Ohio, 199.

² 1 Prest. Abst. 420; 2 Id. 205.

³ *Crabb*, Real Prop. 1046. See 2 *Smith*, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 642, for American cases.

⁴ *Ante*, vol. 1, p. *300.

⁵ *Morrison v. Wilson*, 13 Cal. 494; *Lowell v. Daniels*, 2 Gray, 161; *Concord Bank v. Bellis*, 10 Cush. 276, 278. See, as to estoppel by deed, post, p. *477; *Glidden v. Strupler*, 52 Penn. St. 400, 406. But a married woman may estop herself *in pais*, as to her claim of homestead in Illinois. *Brown v. Coon*, 36 Ill. 249.

⁶ *Lackman v. Wood*, 25 Cal. 153; *Brown v. McCune*, 5 Sandf. 224; *Todd v. Kerr*, 42 Barb. 317.

them can recover the value of the same from the owner of the land.¹

6. Some of the strongest cases, it is believed, where it has been attempted, with more or less success, to establish a title by an estoppel *in pais* in law, are among the following. It is stated, in general terms, that the law will not permit a man to say, that what he has said and done as a solemn act, by which others have acquired rights, was not according to the truth, nor will it allow one who has, in like solemn manner, admitted a matter to be true, to allege it to be false.² But a parol estoppel cannot operate a transfer of the legal title to land.³

7. This is applied in the case of a dedication of the use of one's land to the public as a public common, landing-place, or highway, where private and individual rights have been acquired in reference to it. A dedication to pious and charitable uses may be effectual, though not distinctively a public one, and, if so made that the holder of the estate becomes a trustee for the purposes of a charity, no subsequent conveyance to one having notice, could change the use. The grantee would himself become the trustee. But the mere erecting of a church for a religious society does not dedicate it. The owner may sell it if he pleases. To effect such a dedication, there must be a donation by the owner, or some unequivocal act united with an intent to divest himself, to some extent, of the ownership or power of control over the property, and to vest an independent and irrevocable interest in some other person or body.⁴ The law considers such a state of things in the nature of an estoppel *in pais*, which precludes the [*460] *original owner from revoking such dedication, for this would be a violation of good faith to the public, and to those who have acquired private property with a view to the enjoyment of the use thus publicly granted. But in accepting the dedication of a way, the public take it as it is, and if defective or dangerous, the public will be responsible.⁵

¹ Tolman v. Sparhawk, 5 Met. 475, 477; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 642, 649; Dezell v. Odell, 3 Hill, 215.

² Ham v. Ham, 14 Me. 351; Hicks v. Cram, 17 Verm. 449.

³ Barker v. Bell, 37 Ala. 359; McPherson v. Walters, 16 Ala. 714.

⁴ Attorney-General v. Merrimack Co. 14 Gray, 586, 604.

⁵ Robbins v. Jones, C. B. 26 L. Rep. 291.

If land has been dedicated and accepted as a public square, for instance, and individuals, upon the faith thereof, have built their houses in reference to it as such, the dedication cannot afterwards be rescinded and revoked. And this applies as well to a dedication by a public body as to one by a private individual. Thus, where the commissioners of a county laid out a town for a county seat by a plot, on which certain squares were indicated as "public lots," and individuals built around one of these, it was held that they might enjoin the erection of buildings upon the land thus set apart.¹ Nor does the estoppel depend on the length of time for which this use shall have been enjoyed.²

8. In discussing the matter of estoppel, the court, in *Welland Canal v. Hathaway*, thus speaks of acts *in pais*: "An estoppel is so called because a man is excluded from saying anything, even the truth, against his own act or admission. The acts set up in this case, it is not pretended, constitute a technical estoppel which can only be by deed or matter of record. But it is said they should operate by way of estoppel, — an estoppel *in pais*. Such estoppels cannot be pleaded, but are given in evidence to the court and jury, and may operate as effectually as a technical estoppel under the direction of the court. There are many acts which have been adjudged to be estoppels *in pais*, such as livery, entry, acceptance of rent, &c., but in many, and probably most instances, whether the act or admission shall operate by way of estoppel or not, must depend upon the circumstances of the case. As a general rule, a party will be concluded from denying his own acts or admissions which were expressly designed to influence the conduct of another, and did so influence it, and when such denial will operate to the injury of the latter."³ Thus, where A was about to purchase a lot of land which adjoined B's, and was bounded by it, and, not knowing the boundary line, applied to B to point it out to him, who did so, knowing that the inquiry was made with a

¹ *Rutherford v. Taylor*, 38 Mo. 315; *Abbott v. Mills*, 3 Verm. 521; *Wash. Case*. 2d ed. 209.

² *Cincinnati v. White*, 6 Pet. 438; *Hobbs v. Lowell*, 19 Pick. 405, 409; *Hunter v. Trustees, &c.* 6 Hill, 41; *State v. Trask*, 6 Verm. 355.

³ *Welland Canal v. Hathaway*, 8 Wend. 483. See also *Corning v. Gould*, 16 Wend. 531; *Titus v. Morse*, 40 Me. 348.

view to purchasing it, A having purchased it, relying upon this statement of B, it was held that the latter was estopped to deny that the line thus pointed out by him, was the true one.¹ But the doctrine of estoppel does not apply where everything is equally well known to both parties, or where the party sought to be estopped was ignorant of the facts out of which his rights arose, or where the party seeking to conclude him, was not influenced by the acts or admissions which are set up as the grounds of estoppel.² And to enable a man to set up a title by estoppel, the party must have been ignorant of the true state of the title at the time he took it, or been without means of ascertaining it by a reference to records.³ In Pennsylvania, it has been held, that when a man has encouraged another to settle upon and improve land, and expend his money upon it, he will not be permitted afterwards to take it from him, although he has an older and better title, and acted himself in ignorance of his own right.⁴ But this doctrine applies only to a *bona fide* improver, who is led into a mistaken expenditure by the acts or connivance of another, supposing the property to be his own, and not where he knew the land to be [*461] in dispute between *two parties, and volunteered to originate a new claim.⁵

9. It was once held by the court of Pennsylvania, that if one, having a deed of land, were to stand by and see the land sold by a sheriff, as that of another, and make no objection, he would be estopped to claim it, although the deed, under which he held, was then upon record. But this was afterwards overruled by the same court, and the doctrine therein assumed which had been borrowed from equity. "*qui tacet, consentire videtur, qui potest et debet vetare, jubet*," was not applicable to a sale where there was no element of fraudulent purpose on the part of one keeping silence, and where the purchaser, by the exercise of reasonable diligence, had the means of knowing the

¹ Spiller v. Scribner, 36 Verm. 247.

² Fletcher v. Holmes, 25 Ind. 469; Hill v. Epley, 31 Penn. St. 334.

³ Wood v. Griffin, 46 N. H. 237; Drew v. Kimball, 43 N. H. 262; Gove v. White, 20 Wisc. 430; Hill v. Epley, *sup.*

⁴ M'Kelvey v. Truby, 4 Watts & S. 323.

⁵ M'Cormick v. M'Murtrie, 4 Watts, 195.

true state of the title.¹ But where one made a deed on Sunday, dating it upon another day, and his grantee conveyed the estate to a stranger who was ignorant of this fact, it was held that the grantor was estopped to set up against the latter, that the original deed was made on Sunday.² Among the cases where the doctrine of estoppel has been sought to be applied, was one where the court held, that if one knowingly, though passively, or by looking on, suffers another to purchase and expend money on land under an erroneous opinion of title, without making known his own claim, he shall not exercise his right against such purchaser. The same doctrine is repeated in Maine, as being a principle in equity, that if a man will stand by and see another person make expensive erections on land claimed by him, and give no notice of his claim, he shall be enjoined from afterwards making claim to the same, to the injury of such other person.³ And in another case, it seems to have been adopted as a principle of law, that where one stands by and suffers another to purchase land to which he has a title, and expend money thereon under an erroneous impression that he has acquired a legal title thereto, and does not disclose his own, he shall be estopped to claim the land.⁴ Provided he is himself cognizant of his own legal rights.⁵ Thus, where the defendants owning the lower of two wing dams in a river, by means of which they could flow back upon the upper one, and, having a right to do so, suffered the purchasers of the upper dam, who did not know of this right, to go on and make expensive improvements upon the works at the upper dam, without making known their claim of a right to obstruct these works, although they saw the upper owners making these expenditures, they were estopped to flow back and injure the upper works.⁶ The same principle was applied in New Hamp-

¹ *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 331, overruling *Epley v. Witherow*, 7 Watts, 168. See *Shapley v. Rangeley*, 1 Woodb. & M. 217; *Hill v. Meyers*, 43 Penn. St. 175.

² *Love v. Wells*, 25 Ind. 503.

³ See 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 652; *Rangeley v. Spring*, 21 Me. 130, a. c. 28 Me. 127; *Crest v. Jack*, 3 Watts, 239.

⁴ *Hatch v. Kimball*, 16 Me. 146; *Titus v. Morse*, 40 Me. 348; *Rangeley v. Spring*, 28 Me. 127; *Morrison v. Morrison*, 2 Dana, 13; *Pickard v. Sears*, 6 A. & E. 469; *Snodgrass v. Ricketts*, 13 Cal. 359; *Waters' Appeal*, 35 Penn. St. 526.

⁵ *Junction R. R. v. Harpold*, 19 Ind. 350.

⁶ *Brown v. Bowen*, 30 N. Y. 541.

shire, in respect to personal property which the owner [*462] suffered to be mortgaged in his *presence, to one ignorant of his title.¹ But, in another case, the court suggest doubts whether this admitted doctrine of equity would apply as to the title of real estate, at law;² and in a case in Massachusetts, Wilde, J., denied that it applied, at law, in Massachusetts, or in any State but Pennsylvania, and assumed that the doctrine prevailed there only because of the mixed jurisdiction of law and equity in their courts.³ In a case in New York, where two adjacent owners had occupied, for eleven years, on either side, up to a fence as a division line, and one of them had gone on, with the acquiescence of the other, and made expensive improvements upon the land in his possession, it was held, that the other was estopped from setting up the true line against the one who had thus expended his money; and the chancellor remarked, in giving the opinion, "perhaps a grant might be presumed *within* twenty years."⁴ In Massachusetts, if a party can be estopped to claim land by reason of standing by and even tacitly encouraging the sale thereof, it is only where he *conceals* an outstanding title.⁵ And where adjacent owners, intending to establish the true line, agree upon one which is not such, and occupy under it, under a mistake as to the true line, neither is estopped to claim, in a real action, to the true line, especially if the tenant has not made improvements on the land of greater value than that of the land without such improvements, and for which he is entitled to recover of the demandant.⁶

9 a. The importance of fixing, as far as may be, by proper limits, the doctrine of *estoppel in pais*, in its application to titles of real estate, seems to require some additional illustration to what has already been said. And, in the first place, an *estoppel in pais*, where it applies, is as effectual as a deed, but

¹ Thompson v. Sanborn, 11 N. H. 201.

² Marshall v. Pierce, 12 N. H. 128; but see Runlet v. Otis, 2 N. H. 167.

³ Heard v. Hall, 16 Pick. 457, 460.

⁴ Adams v. Rockwell, 16 Wend. 285, 303; Lavery v. Moore, 32 Barb. 351.

⁵ Parker v. Barker, 2 Met. 423; Copeland v. Copeland, 28 Me. 525; Stevens v. McNamara, 36 Me. 178; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 650.

⁶ Tolman v. Sparhawk, 5 Met. 469; Titus v. Morse, 40 Me. 348, 355; Ormsby v. Ihmsen, 34 Penn. St. 462; Robinson v. Justice, 2 Penn. 22, 23.

no more so. So that, if the party doing the act could not have made a deed of the land in question, his act cannot create an estate by estoppel in the same.¹ In the next place, a party who insists upon the act of another as working an estoppel, must show that he acted upon the same, and that it formed the inducement which led him at the time to do what he did. Thus, where an infant, whose land had been irregularly sold during his minority, made declarations after he came of age expressing his satisfaction with the sale; it was held not to be an estoppel to his claim to the estate, because, being made long after the sale, it could have formed no inducement to the party to make the purchase.² But acts and declarations of a positive character, are not the only grounds of estoppel. Under some circumstances one may, by being silent or passive, when he ought to speak or act, estop himself from claiming his rights. Questions of this kind have most frequently arisen in cases where one, having a claim upon land, has stood by or known of a sale of it being made as the property of another, without disclosing his claim. This notion has been carried, in some cases, to an absurd extent. In one, the court intimate, that if a man were to see his estate advertised to be sold as that of another, he would be bound to publish notice of his title, unless he was openly in possession of the premises.³ Amongst the variety of rulings of courts upon this subject, some of which may be found in the cases cited below, the better opinion now seems to be, that if a man holds a title to his lands by deed which has been duly recorded, it is all the notice he is bound to give so long as he remains passive;⁴ and that it is only when he sees another purchasing land upon which he has some unrecorded lien or charge, of which the other is ignorant, that he is bound to give notice thereof. And

¹ *Lowell v. Daniels*, 2 Gray, 169; *Beaupland v. McKeen*, 28 Penn. St. 124; ante, p. *459.

² *Ackley v. Dygert*, 33 Penn. St. 176, 193; *Allen v. Allen*, 45 Penn. St. 473.

³ *Keeler v. Vantuyte*, 6 Penn. St. 253; *Billington v. Welsh*, 5 Binn. 129; *Brown v. Bowen*, 30 N. Y. 519.

⁴ *Goandie v. Northampton Water Co.* 7 Penn. St. 233; *Knouff v. Thompson*, 16 Penn. St. 364; *Patterson v. Esterling*, 27 Ga. 207; *Fisher v. Mossman*, 11 Ohio, St. 42, 47; *Tongue's Lessee v. Nutwell*, 17 Md. 212, 230; *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 332; *Odlin v. Gove*, 41 N. H. 477; *Brinckerhoff v. Lansing*, 4 Johns. Ch. 70; *Bigelow v. Topliff*, 25 Verm. 287; *Carter v. Champion*, 8 Conn. 554.

upon failing to do so, he is estopped to set up such claim against the purchaser.¹ In the words of one of the courts: "It is only when silence becomes a fraud, that it postpones."² The cases all concur in this, that no man can set up another's act or declaration as the ground of an estoppel, unless he has himself been misled or deceived by such act or declaration, nor can he set it up, where he knew, or had the same means of knowledge, as to the truth of the statement, as the other party.³ The same rule has been applied, where the owner of land has stood by and allowed another to go on and make improvements upon it, in the mistaken belief that he was the owner thereof. If the true owner not only knows of such expenditures being incurred, but also that the other party is doing it under a belief that he owns the land, it is regarded a fraud to suffer him to go on without notice, and he would thereby be estopped to claim the improvements, &c., and in some cases, even the land itself.⁴ Thus, where A sold land to B by parol, without giving any deed, and represented to C that he had conveyed it to B, and thereupon C purchased the estate of B, and made improvements upon it, it was held that A was estopped to set up a title against C, on the ground that he had not made a deed to B.⁵

9 b. It is difficult to draw the precise line how far positive fraud must enter into the act or declaration of the party who is sought to be estopped. But that it must have the same effect upon the party who sets it up as an estoppel, as a fraud, is probably universally true. The cases upon the subject are numerous and not easily reconciled. An able and elaborate

¹ *Gray v. Bartlett*, 20 Pick. 193.

² *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 331. See also *Pickard v. Sears*, 6 A. & E. 469; *Wells v. Pierce*, 7 Foster, 511; *Drew v. Rust*, 36 N. H. 342; *Gregg v. Wells*, 10 A. & E. 90; *Blackwood v. Jones*, 4 Jones (Eq.), 56; *Cochran v. Harrow*, 22 Ill. 345; *Watkins v. Peck*, 13 N. H. 373; *Brinkerhoff v. Lansing*, 4 Johns. Ch. 70; *Davis v. Davis*, 26 Cal. 42; post, pl. 9, b.

³ *Ormsby v. Ihmsen*, 34 Penn. St. 472; *Gray v. Bartlett*, 20 Pick. 193; *McCune v. McMichael*, 29 Geo. 312; *Jewett v. Miller*, 10 N. Y. 406; *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 331; *Ferris v. Coover*, 10 Cal. 589.

⁴ *McGarrity v. Byington*, 12 Cal. 431; *Knouff v. Thompson*, 16 Penn. St. 364; *Goundie v. Northampton Water Co.* 7 Penn. St. 233; *Robinson v. Justice*, 2 Penn. 22; *Gatling v. Rodman*, 6 Ind. 289; *Odlin v. Gove*, 41 N. H. 477.

⁵ *Keys v. Test*, 33 Ill. 316.

opinion by Field, C. J., maintains the doctrine, that to estop a man by his act or admission, it must be fraudulently done, and the same principle is sustained by the court of Pennsylvania, in *Hill v. Epley*. The language of the former is this: "It is undoubtedly true that a party will, in many instances, be concluded by his declarations or conduct which have influenced the conduct of another to his injury. The party is said, in such cases, to be estopped from denying the truth of his admissions. But to the application of this principle with respect to the title to property, it must appear, first, that the party making the admission by his declarations or conduct, was apprized of the true state of his own title; second, that he made the admission with the express intention to deceive, or with such careless and culpable negligence as to amount to constructive fraud; third, that the other party was not only destitute of all knowledge of the true state of the title, but of the means of acquiring such knowledge; and fourth, that he relied directly upon such admission, and will be injured by allowing its truth to be disproved."¹ And the language of the court of Pennsylvania is in accordance with this. "The primary ground of the doctrine is, that it would be a fraud in a party to assert what his previous conduct had denied, when, on the faith of that denial, others have acted. The element of fraud is essential either in the intention of the party estopped, or in the effect of the evidence which he attempts to set up."² The portion of the foregoing propositions which is the most obnoxious to criticism in the light of other decided cases, is the doctrine that one would not be estopped by his acts or declaration, if done in ignorance of his rights, and without fraud, or that carelessness which amounts to constructive fraud. But the cases are not few, where it has been held, that a party may be estopped by his acts and declarations, if designed to influence the conduct of another who relies upon the same, and acts accordingly, although both were ignorant that what is thereby repre-

¹ *Boggs v. Merced Co.* 14 Cal. 367; *Glidden v. Strupler*, 52 Penn. St. 405.

² *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 334. See also 1 Story, Eq. § 391; *Adams, Eq.* 151; *Copeland v. Copeland*, 28 Maine, 539; *Whitaker v. Williams*, 20 Conn. 104; *Delaplaine v. Hitchcock*, 6 Hill, 17; *Tolman v. Sparhawk*, 5 Met. 475; *Brewer v. Boston & Worcester R. R.* Id. 487; *McCracken v. San Francisco*, 16 Cal. 626, 627.

sented is not true. And this, upon the familiar principle that if one of two innocent parties must suffer, he through whose agency the loss occurred should sustain it. It may therefore be stated, by way of illustration, as a legal proposition, that if one were induced to purchase an estate by the acts or representations of another, designed to influence his conduct, and creating a reasonable belief on his part, under which he acts, that he is thereby acquiring a valid title to the same, the party who should thus have influenced him, would be estopped to set up his own title existing at the time of the purchase, against that of the purchaser. It is enough that the latter has been misled by the acts or declarations of the former, if the same were intended to influence and did influence his conduct, although no fraud was designed.¹ Probably the language of Lord Campbell in defining what would constitute an estoppel, would be found to furnish a broader and better rule than that which requires positive fraud as one of its essential elements, and the same is approved by the court of Massachusetts, viz. "If a party wilfully make a representation to another, meaning it to be acted upon, and it is so acted upon, that gives rise to what is called an estoppel." "The party setting up such a bar to the reception of the truth, must show that there was a wilful intent to make him act on the faith of the representation, and that he did so act." And by "wilfully," as explained in *Freeman v. Cook*, "we must understand, if not that the party represents that to be true which he knows to be untrue, at least that he *means* his representation to be acted upon, and that it is acted upon accordingly."² But a disclaimer of title made to one who was not thereby influenced to rely upon it, and did not actually rely upon it in his acts, in such a manner that it would work a fraud upon him to have it denied or re-

¹ *Beaupland v. McKeen*, 28 Penn. St. 124; *Robinson v. Justice*, 2 Penn. 22; *Morris Canal v. Lewis*, 1 Beasley, 332; *Knouff v. Thompson*, 16 Penn. St. 361; *Waters' Appeal*, 35 Penn. St. 526; *Freeman v. Cooke*, 2 Exch. 663; *Cornish v. Abington*, 4 Hurl. & N. 549; *Jewett v. Miller*, 10 N. Y. 406; *McCune v. McMichael*, 99 Ga. 312; *Tilton v. Nelson*, 27 Barb. 595; *Blackwood v. Jones*, 4 Jones (Eq.), 76; *Newman v. Edwards*, 34 Penn. St. 34; *Snodgrass v. Ricketts*, 13 Cal. 362; *Barnes v. McKay*, 7 Ind. 301.

² *Howard v. Hudson*, 2 E. & Black. 10; *Andrews v. Lyons*, 11 Allen, 349; note to Am. ed. 2 E. & Black. 13.

tracted, would not work an estoppel.¹ But where one, about to purchase a parcel of land, inquired of B if he had any claim upon it, and he, by forgetfulness and honest mistake, informed the inquirer that he had not, when in fact he had, he was estopped to set it up against this purchaser who had acted upon the faith of his representation.² And where a husband and wife were tenants by entirety, and, after his death, the estate was sold and the widow, ignorant of her rights as survivor, and in good faith, encouraged a purchaser to bid for and take a deed of it, she and her heirs were held to be estopped thereby to set up a claim to the estate.³ In order, however, to work an estoppel *in pais*, the acts and declarations relied on must have been accompanied with an intention and design that they should be acted upon by the party who sets up the estoppel, and he must have acted upon them accordingly.⁴ Silence alone would not have that effect unless it were in itself fraudulent.⁵ As, for example, he, knowing his title, should wilfully conceal it, and allow an innocent party to go on and be misled by his silent acquiescence.⁶ But if the party purchasing, in such a case, were cognizant of the facts, he could not avail himself of his ignorance, or mistake in respect to their legal effect.⁷ The principles applicable to cases of estoppel *in pais*, as affecting the title to real property, can, however, be better illustrated by a reference to some of the cases in which analogous questions have been raised, than by general rules and propositions. In that of *Tilton v. Nelson*, a husband and wife, having mortgaged an estate to Loan Commissioners, with a power of sale, the husband applied to them to make sale of the same, and induced

¹ *Mahoney v. Van Winkle*, 21 Cal. 580; *Carpentier v. Thirston*, 24 Cal. 283. See also *Davis v. Davis*, 26 Cal. 38-44.

² *Beardsley v. Foot*, 14 Ohio St. 416, and cases cited on p. 417.

³ *Maple v. Kussart*, 53 Penn. St. 352.

⁴ *Turner v. Coffin*, 12 Allen, 401; *Andrews v. Lyons*, 11 Allen, 350; *Plumer v. Lord*, 9 Allen, 457, 458; *Brown v. Bowen*, 30 N. Y. 541; *Plumb v. Cattaraugus Ins. Co.* 18 N. Y. 392; *Russell v. Maloney*, 39 Verm. 584.

⁵ *Maple v. Kussart*, 53 Penn. St. 352.

⁶ *Odlin v. Gove*, 41 N. H. 473; ante, pl. 9, a.

⁷ *Tilton v. Nelson*, 27 Barb. 595; *Storrs v. Barker*, 6 Johns. Ch. 166, 170; *Hobbs v. Norton*, 1 Vern. 136; *Hunsden v. Cheyney*, 2 Vern. 150; *Raw v. Pote*, 2 Vern. 239; *Wood v. Griffin*, 46 N. H. 237; *Drew v. Kimball*, 43 N. H. 282. See *Jordan v. Stevens*, 51 Maine, 84, where one was allowed to avail herself of ignorance of her legal rights.

the officers of a bank, who held a judgment against him, to purchase the mortgaged estate for the purpose of satisfying their debt, which they did, and the bank afterwards sold the estate in parcels. The sale was for some reason irregular on the part of the commissioners, and the title defective, and after the husband's death, his heir-at-law attempted to recover the land on that ground. But it appearing that the father knew the facts, though not their legal effect, and had induced the bank to purchase the estate, as if the title were a valid one, the court held that he and all privy in estate with him were estopped to set up an adverse title. In *Storrs v. Barker*, the plaintiff's daughter, whose heir he was, made a will while *covert*, devising her real estate to her husband. The husband offered the land for sale, and the father, supposing the will to be valid, advised the defendant to purchase it, stating at the same time that he had no claim to it. Soon after the purchase, the plaintiff ascertained that the devise, being that of a *feme covert*, was void, and claimed the estate. But the court held that he was estopped to set up a title against one whom he had thus misled as to the true state of the title. In *Hunsden v. Cheyney*, a son settled upon his wife, at marriage, a term in the presence of his mother, stating to her that the same was to come to him at his mother's death. This, though done in his mother's presence and hearing, and she was witness to the deed, was not denied by her, and she did not then know that she had a claim to the term as a tenant in tail. And it was held that she was thereby estopped to set up any greater estate in the term than one for her own life. In *Blackwood v. Jones*, one having a claim upon land was present at the sale, and, to an inquiry, stated that his claim had been settled. He was held to be estopped to set up the same against the purchaser. And in *Snodgrass v. Ricketts*, the true owner was held to be estopped, where a sale was made by another in his presence, and the purchaser was instigated by the one who had the title, to buy the land. In *Beaupland v. McKeen*, one who had been employed to purchase land for another, who bought and paid for the same upon the faith that he had obtained thereby a good title, was estopped to set up a pre-existing adverse title, which he had purchased after the purchase made by the tenant.

9 c. Numerous questions have arisen between parties owning adjoining lands, from fixing the dividing lines between them, or constructing division fences separating them, wherein it has been attempted to apply the doctrine of estoppel, excluding the right to change these, if afterwards found not to conform to the true division lines. Many of these cases will be found collected in 2 Smith's Leading Cases (5th Am. edition, p. 649). But the decisions have been so variant, that a few of them ought properly to be mentioned before attempting to deduce any rule applicable to such cases. In *Commonwealth v. Pejepscut Proprietors*,¹ a resolve of the legislature establishing the bounds of the lands of the State, estopped the latter from denying they were the true bounds. In *Lavery v. Moore*,² two adjoining owners of land covered with water, which they were about to fill, agreed upon a line between them, and one of them went on and filled his part up to the line agreed upon. The other having claimed beyond this line, the court held he was estopped to deny that the line agreed upon was the true one, it having been settled by the acts and acquiescence of the respective owners on each side. It will be remarked, that the act of filling, in this case, had greatly enhanced the original value of the land, at the expense of him who made it. On the other hand, there is a class of cases where, as in *Tolman v. Sparhawk*, above cited, it has been held that a line agreed upon, or a division fence constructed by parties, if the same were done under a mistake, and the true line were afterwards to be ascertained, might be corrected.³ Thus in *Brewer v. Boston & Worcester Railroad*,⁴ the parties, intending to establish the true division line between them, fixed the bounds indicating this line, and occupied their lands accordingly for more than twenty years. When the tenant, who had purchased of the original owner upon one side of the line, was about to make the purchase, he inquired of the other owner as to the land, and was told by the latter, that he did not own beyond the line above

¹ 10 Mass. 155.

² 32 Barb. 347, 351.

³ *Prop. Liverpool Wharf v. Prescott*, 7 Allen, 494; *Thayer v. Bacon*, 3 Allen, 163; *Coon v. Smith*, 29 N. Y. 392; *Baldwin v. Brown*, 16 N. Y. 359; *Russell v. Maloney*, 39 Verm. 580.

⁴ *Brewer v. Bos. & Wor. R. R.* 5 Met. 478. See also *Cook v. Babcock*, 11 Cush. 210. But see *Blair v. Smith*, 16 Mo. 281.

mentioned. The tenant thereupon purchased and entered upon the land, filled it up, erected fences and buildings upon it, in the presence of the other owner, who frequently pointed out the line, and never objected to the acts of the tenant, nor gave him any notice that he claimed the land. It was, afterwards, by the decision of another case, ascertained that the line agreed upon and occupied was not the true line, and the party who had agreed to it brought an action against the tenant to recover the strip of land between the true and agreed line. And the court held, that he was not estopped by these several transactions, because the line was agreed upon in good faith, under a mistake of facts, and it was now ascertained where the true line was. The party made no declaration contrary to his honest belief at the time, or with any intention to deceive the tenant. The court, moreover, state this broad proposition, which certainly is apparently at variance with more than one of the propositions contained in what has already been said: "A party is not to be estopped to prove a legal title to his estate by any misrepresentation of its locality, made by mistake, without fraud or intentional deception, although another party may be induced thereby to purchase an adjoining lot, the title to which may prove defective." Whether the doctrine above stated can be reconciled to rules and dicta which are found in the cases before cited, or some of those hereafter mentioned, it is well to discriminate between cases like that of *Brewer v. Boston & Worcester Railroad*, and another class which have arisen in the same court, and might, at first thought, mislead the inquirer. If, for instance, the line between two adjacent owners be in dispute, and the parties refer to arbitrators to determine the same, who hear and award upon the subject, the several owners will be bound to conform to such award.¹ But while the award of arbitrators as to such line would be binding upon the parties to it, no award as to the *title* to any part of such lands would be binding.² A mere agreement, though a mutual one, to employ a common agent to run a line and set up the bounds between two proprietors would not estop either

¹ *Goodridge v. Dustin*, 5 Met. 363. See *Whitney v. Holmes*, 15 Mass. 152; *Kellogg v. Smith*, 7 Cush. 381.

² *Vosburgh v. Teator*, 32 N. Y. 567; *Jackson v. Dyal*, 2 Cain. R. 198; *Robertson v. McNiel*, 12 Wend. 578; *Terry v. Chandler*, 16 N. Y. 356.

party from showing an error or mistake in this line.¹ So where the deeds of the parties called for certain monuments, not then in existence, or a certain line which had not been run out on the face of the earth, and the parties came together and fixed the monuments, or agreed upon where the line should run, they would, if it was followed by occupation, be bound by their agreement, and estopped from claiming another. The distinction between these classes of cases is, that in the one, the parties, by mistake, agree upon a line where their mistake can be corrected, and the true line ascertained. In the other, they simply make that certain which had never before been determined. Thus in *Kellogg v. Smith*, the deed referred to a certain line not ascertainable by existing bounds, or known monuments. The adjoining owners agreed, that certain existing marks or monuments should indicate where the line was, and after that, occupied each to that line for a considerable length of time. The court held the parties bound and estopped by this as the true line. Among the cases referred to by the court was a class where the parties, in fixing the *location* of their lands, agreed upon a certain line between them. This, if followed by an occupancy, was held to bind them by such agreement, if the line they had thus fixed had previously been ambiguous and uncertain.² In another, the parties settled a disputed line by agreement, and occupied under it, and it was held to estop them.³ But it seems to imply that there is no satisfactory mode of determining what the true line is, and if, under such circumstances, the parties agree upon one, and mutually enter upon the occupancy of their lands in conformity to this, they thereby make that the line by which they are mutually to be bound as the true one.⁴ In Massachusetts, the court have held that a

¹ *Thayer v. Bacon*, 3 Allen, 164; *Russell v. Maloney*, 39 Verm. 580; *Doe v. McCullough*, 1 Kerr (N. B.), 466.

² *Adams v. Rockwell*, 16 Wend. 285; s. c. 7 Cow. 761; *Jackson v. Ogden*, 7 Johns. 238; *Dibble v. Rogers*, 13 Wend. 536; *Chew v. Morton*, 10 Watts, 321; *Gray v. Berry*, 9 N. H. 473; *Orr v. Hadley*, 36 N. H. 575, 578, 579; *Lindsay v. Springer*, 4 Harring. 547; *Rockwell v. Adams*, 6 Wend. 467. See *Jackson v. Van Corlaer*, 11 Johns. 123; *Jackson v. Murray*, 7 Johns. 5; *Terry v. Chandler*, 16 N. Y. 355; *Daggett v. Willey*, 6 Flor. 482, 507.

³ *Kip v. Norton*, 12 Wend. 127; *Houston v. Sneed*, 15 Texas, 307.

⁴ *Sneed v. Osborn*, 25 Cal. 624, 630; *Blair v. Smith*, 16 Mo. 279; *Russell v. Maloney*, *sup.*

party who should agree upon a line by mistake, would not be estopped to claim up to the true line, although the other party may in the mean time have erected buildings or incurred other expense upon the land which he claims.¹ While in New York, under like circumstances, it was held that it would work an estoppel, if the party making the improvements would otherwise lose the benefit of the same.² In another, such an agreement was held to be only *prima facie* evidence of what was the true line, but not conclusive.³ The law, as stated in a later case in New York on this subject, is, if adjacent proprietors fix a boundary line between them, in which they both acquiesce, and to which they occupy for a long period, "rarely less than twenty years," it is held to be of such a conclusive nature, that either party is precluded from offering any evidence to the contrary. "Unless their acquiescence has continued for a sufficient length of time to become thus conclusive, it is of no importance."⁴ And in another, it was held, that if, after such agreement, one of the parties were to see a third party take a conveyance of the adjacent land for a valuable consideration according to the monuments agreed upon, he would be estopped to claim adversely to such monument.⁵ While in another case, the court laid down the doctrine broadly, that "an admission by a party of a mistaken line for the true one, has no legal effect upon his title."⁶ In the case of *Adams v. Rockwell*, above cited, an element of estoppel was recognized as applicable to cases where the line had been agreed upon by mistake, and could be ascertained, and that was in the words of the head note: "If, during such acquiescence, expensive improvements, by the erection of buildings or otherwise, had been made by the occupant of the premises in dispute, the owner would have been estopped from setting up the true line." So that, if this be law,

¹ *Proprietors, &c. v. Prescott*, 7 Allen, 496. See *Knowlton v. Smith*, 36 Mo. 507.

² *Corkhill v. Landers*, 44 Barb. 228.

³ *Gove v. Richardson*, 4 Me. 327.

⁴ *Reed v. Farr*, 35 N. Y. 117, affirming *Baldwin v. Brown*, 16 N. Y. 359. See *Doe v. McCullough*, 1 Kerr (N. B.), 460; *Sneed v. Osborn*, 25 Cal. 626; *Boyd v. Graves*, 4 Wheat. 517; *Prop. Liverpool Wharf v. Prescott*, 7 Allen, 496.

⁵ *Colby v. Norton*, 19 Me. 412.

⁶ *Crowell v. Bebee*, 10 Verm. 33.

it is not the agreement of the parties, nor the occupying under it, nor the good faith with which this was done, but the amount of money, whether much or little, which the tenant may have expended upon the land.

10. If one enters upon land under an executory contract with another, he will be estopped to deny the title of the latter, as it would be a violation of good faith to obtain possession under such an agreement, and then to deny the right of the other party to reclaim the possession, or the fruits of the contract.¹

* These cases will serve to indicate the rules adopted [*463] by the courts in applying the doctrine of estoppel *in pais* to questions of title to lands, each case depending somewhat upon its own circumstances. Whereas, in respect to estoppels by deed, it will be found that a system of rules, much more uniform and defined, have become the policy of the law in determining the titles of conflicting claimants to lands.

11. In treating of estoppels by deed, it will be necessary to consider the distinction between indentures and deeds poll, and, further, the distinction between such deeds poll as do, and such as do not, contain covenants of title in respect to the estate granted or released thereby. But it will not be attempted to discriminate between what is to be regarded as a rebutter, and the more general doctrine of estoppel. It should be borne in mind, moreover, in treating of this subject, that in creating estoppel by deed, the deed, unless thus aided, would be of no avail, by reason of the state of facts being other than what they are assumed to be by the instrument itself, and which, if true, would have given effect to the deed by its own intrinsic virtue. Thus if, for a valuable consideration, A makes a deed to B, wherein he assumes to convey a specific parcel of land, he thereby asserts that he is the owner of it, and that a title to the same thereby passes to B. And yet if he has no title, nothing in fact passes by the deed. But if he shall, soon after this, become the owner of this land, and the purchaser insists upon claiming it, it would not be open to

¹ *Million v. Riley*, 1 Dana, 359; *Harle v. McCoy*, 7 J. J. Marsh. 318; *Winlock v. Hardy*, 4 Lit. 272; *Moore v. Farrow*, 3 A. K. Marsh. 41.

him to deny such claim, after having thus taken the grantee's money, and having solemnly declared that he was and should be the owner of the land.¹ Again, it should be remembered, that an estoppel by deed is always applied in some action or proceeding based on the deed, in which the fact in question is recited. In a collateral action there can be no estoppel,² nor will estoppels by deed avail in favor of any but the parties and their privies.³

12. It is laid down generally in Sheppard's Touchstone, that an indented deed works an estoppel, that is, "doth bar and conclude either party, his heirs, and all persons claiming under or through him, except heirs *in tail*, &c., to say or accept anything against anything contained in it." In case of a lease by indenture, "both parties are estopped to say the lessor had nothing in the land at the time of the lease made, so that, if the lessor happen to have the land thereafter by purchase or descent, the lessee may, during the term, enter upon him by way of conclusion." If the lease, however, pass any interest it will not operate beyond that as an estoppel. On the other hand, a deed poll binds only the feoffor, lessor, &c., and it would seem that a lessor by a deed poll would be as much bound on his part as if the instrument were an indenture.⁴ But if one is induced by fraud to accept an indenture of land, he may, as tenant, deny that the other party has any title.⁵ And though, if a man take a lease for years, by indenture, of his own land, he would, during the term, be estopped to deny the lessor's title, the estoppel would continue only during the term. It would determine with the lease.⁶ And whether the deed be indented or poll in form, if there are therein reciprocal obligations from one to another and it is executed by both,

¹ *Clark v. Baker*, 14 Cal. 629; post, *477.

² *Carter v. Carter*, 3 Kay & J. 645.

³ *Carpenter v. Buller*, 8 M. & W. 212.

⁴ *Shep. Touch. Prest. ed.* 53, and note; *Hermitage v. Tomkins*, 1 Ld. Raym. 729; 2 *Prest. Abst.* 210; *Bac. Abr. Leases*, O.; *Com. Dig. Estoppel*, E. 8; *Jackson v. Murray*, 12 Johns. 204; *Jackson v. Bull*, 1 Johns. Cas. 90; *Rawle, Cov.* 3d ed. 402; *Co. Lit.* 47 b; *Webb v. Austin*, 7 M. & G. 724; *Beaupland v. McKeen*, 28 Penn. St. 132; *Cuthbertson v. Irving*, 4 H. & N. 742, 754.

⁵ *Alderson v. Miller*, 15 Gratt. 279; *Jackson v. Ayers*, 14 Johns. 224.

⁶ *Rawlyns' case*, 4 Rep. 54; *Taylor, L. & Ten.* §§ 88, 89, 3d ed.; *Doe v. Scaton*, 2 *Crompt. M. & R.* 730; *Doe v. Barton*, 11 A. & E. 307; ante, vol. 1, p. *367.

it is binding on both parties.¹ Thus there is no estoppel upon a grantee to deny a grantor's title where the grant is of a fee, *as there would be in the case of a [*464] lease by indenture, which depends upon the obligation which the lessee is under to return the land and surrender the possession,² though if the lease be by deed poll, the lessee might deny the lessor's title.³ Wherever there is this obligation to restore possession to the lessor, the tenant is estopped to deny the title of him under whom he enters.⁴ But a grantor by deed poll, as well as indenture, is estopped to deny the title of his grantee by setting up any claim which existed in his favor at the time of the grant.⁵ A man would be estopped by his deed, to deny that he granted the estate thereby in terms conveyed, or that he had good title to the same. But he would not be bound by the recital in his deed as to the amount paid for the consideration of the conveyance.⁶

13. It is laid down in a work of high authority, that in New York, and some other of the States, the acceptance of a grant is held to be a conclusive admission of the grantor's title. But that there is no general or inflexible principle which precludes the grantee of land from showing, either that the grantor had no title, or none which was capable of passing by the grant. It is also stated to be now well settled, that a mere acceptance of a conveyance does not estop the grantee from showing that the grantor had no estate in the land conveyed.⁷ By accepting a deed, the grantee or lessee becomes bound not to deny the effect and provisions of such deed.⁸ Thus, it is never permitted to a person to accept a deed with covenants of seisin,

¹ Shep. Touch. Prest. ed. 53.

² *Osterhout v. Shoemaker*, 3 Hill, 513; Rawle, Cov. 3d ed. 408, note; *Ham v. Ham*, 14 Me. 351; *Watkins v. Holman*, 16 Pet. 25, 53; *Small v. Proctor*, 15 Mass. 495; *Blight's Lessee v. Rochester*, 7 Wheat. 548.

³ *Bac. Abr. Leases*, O.; *Co. Lit.* 47 b; *Gaunt v. Wainman*, 3 Bing. n. c. 69.

⁴ *Miller v. Shackelford*, 4 Dana, 286; *Bac. Abr. Leases*, O.; *Great Falls Co. v. Worster*, 15 N. H. 412, 450.

⁵ *Currier v. Earl*, 13 Me. 216; *Wilkinson v. Scott*, 17 Mass. 249, 257; *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116.

⁶ *Wilkinson v. Scott*, 17 Mass. 257; *Fairley v. Fairley*, 34 Miss. 18.

⁷ 2 *Smith*, L. Cas. 5 Am. ed. 654; *Sparrow v. Kingman*, 1 Comst. 242; *Averill v. Wilson*, 4 Barb. 180. But see *Woolfolk v. Ashby*, 2 Met. (Ky.) 288, and post, p. *467. That it is not an estoppel, see *Blair v. Smith*, 16 Mo. 275, 279.

⁸ *Shep. Touch. Prest. ed.* 53; *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116, 121.

and then turn around upon his grantor and allege that his covenant is broken, because he, the grantee, was himself seised of the premises at the time of the making of the deed.¹ So where one who owns land adjacent to that of another, purchases of the latter a parcel bounding by his own, and the line is definitely described in the deed, he and his successors would be estopped to claim that he was, when he took his deed, holding adversely any part of the land beyond the boundary line thus described.² But a grantor may disseise his grantee, and if he does so, he would not be estopped by his deed, to claim title against his grantee by adverse possession as such disseisor to the land which he had formerly conveyed.³

14. Some forms of conveyance operate as an estoppel against those who make them, from their very nature, as is the case with a feoffment. Others, as is the case with a simple release, have no effect beyond passing or extinguishing whatever interest the releasor has at the time. Others operate by way of estoppel, by reason of the covenants as to title they contain, and it may be stated, as a general proposition, that a party to a deed is estopped to deny any thing stated in the deed which has operated upon the other party as the inducement to accept and act under such deed, and this extends to facts stated in other deeds referred to directly, or by way of recital. Thus, a feoffment by a person who is not the owner of lands, passes of necessity a fee by wrong or disseisin. It binds the feoffor, [*465] for life, by estoppel, so that he cannot claim *the right, should it descend to him, against his own feoffee. He cannot purchase the fee, since his feoffment is a disseisin. But it is an estoppel only to him personally, and will not bind his heirs. Lord Coke says, there is a diversity between a feoffment and a warranty. A feoffment is good against the feoffor, but not against his heirs; a warranty is good against one and his heirs. As far as the heir claims as heir, he may be barred by force of the warranty as a rebutter, though not bound by the feoffment.⁴ Thus, if an heir apparent makes a feoffment

¹ *Fitch v. Baldwin*, 17 Johns. 161. See *Smith v. Strong*, 14 Pick. 128.

² *Hodges v. Eddy*, 38 Verm. 349; *Root v. Crock*, 7 Penn. St. 378.

³ *Franklin v. Dorland*, 28 Cal. 180.

⁴ 2 Prest. Abst. 212; Burt. Real Prop. § 83; Co. Lit. 265 a.

in the life of his ancestor, of land which afterwards descends to him, he will be estopped to set up a title against his feoffee.¹

15. There are various reasons why a deed of simple release passes only such interest or estate as the releasor has at the time, and never operates by way of estoppel to convey any interest which he may afterwards acquire. In order to prevent maintenance and the multiplying of contentions, as stated by Lord Coke, it was an established maxim of the common law, that no *possibility*, right, title, or any other thing that was not in possession or *vested in right*, could be granted or assigned to strangers.² Thus, a simple release by an heir apparent of his chance of succession, though made by deed, will not bar his title when it accrues.³ So one who has a contingent remainder, an interest by way of executory devise, or a possibility like that of an heir apparent, even though he may not at common law make a grant of such an interest by deed so as to pass the same distinctly, may convey the estate out of which his interest is to arise, in such a manner that this will operate as an estoppel, and prevent his claiming such interest when it arises.⁴ Thus equity holds a contract of an expectant heir, who becomes heir *de facto*, binding on him, though equity does not extend this to his heir.⁵ Many of the cases on this *point are collected by Putnam, J., in his [*466] opinion in *White v. Patten*, in which case there was a conveyance with covenants of warranty; from which it would seem, that in order to work an estoppel in such cases as those supposed above, there must be either a grant or release with a general covenant of warranty, or an express affirmation in the grantor's deed of there being an estate such as he assumes to convey.⁶ And if the grantor convey by deed all

¹ 2 Prest. Abst. 408, 409.

² Co. Lit. 265 a, note 212.

³ 1 Prest. Abst. 302; 2 Prest. Conv. 268.

⁴ Ante, *238, *367.

⁵ 2 Prest. Abst. 210; 2 Prest. Conv. 268, 271; *Hayne v. Maltby*, 3 T. R. 438; *Weale v. Lower*, Pollexf. 54, where the conveyance was by fine; ante, pp. *341, *357; *Parefoy v. Rogers*, 2 Saund. 388 d; *Fitch v. Fitch*, 8 Pick. 483; ante, pp. *227, *367; *Waik. Conv.* 199, *Coventry's note*; *Stover v. Eycleshimer*, 46 Barb. 84.

⁶ *White v. Patten*, 24 Pick. 324-328; *Wight v. Shaw*, 5 Cush. 56, 63.

his right and interest in the granted premises, he would not be estopped to claim against his grantee under a newly acquired title, although his deed were to contain a general covenant of warranty.¹

16. Thus, it is said, a mere deed of grant with or without an indenture, does not, in a court of law, work an estoppel, whether operating as a grant, a release, or a confirmation, and if an heir apparent were to grant *his interest*, it would not have any effect at law, though he should afterwards become actually seised.² But a fine levied by an heir binds his estate afterwards acquired by descent.³ So where a testator was disseised and died, having by his will made two of his sons executors, with power to sell his lands. They did so as executors, and afterwards, together with the other heirs, brought ejectment against the purchaser on the ground that, the testator having been disseised, nothing passed by their deed. But the court held, that they were estopped to deny the effect of their deed, by claiming the land themselves.⁴ A husband, entitled as such to an estate for life, conveyed the estate in trust for his wife, in order to avoid his creditors, covenanting against the claims of all persons claiming under him. He then went into insolvency, and his assignee sold the estate, on the ground that his former deed was void as against creditors, and the husband himself purchased it. But it was held, that he was estopped by his former deed to set up a title against his grantee. The defect in the title was like an encumbrance created by himself, against which he had covenanted, and by removing it, he had done no more than he had by his covenant engaged to do.⁵

17. And no title not *in esse* will pass by deed, unless this contains a warranty, in which case it operates as an estoppel as to such future title.⁶

18. It is further held, that the words "granted, bargained,

¹ Hope v. Stone, 10 Min. 152.

² 2 Prest. Abst. 410; Clark v. Baker, 14 Cal. 612, 627, 629.

³ Helps v. Hereford, 2 B. & Ald. 242.

⁴ Poor v. Robinson, 10 Mass. 136.

⁵ Gibbs v. Thayer, 6 Cush. 30, 34.

⁶ Jackson v. Wright, 14 Johns. 193; Dart v. Dart, 7 Conn. 250; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 624; Somes v. Skinner, 3 Pick. 52, 61; Blanchard v. Brooks, 12 Pick. 47.

sold, and released," in a deed, do not amount to an estoppel as to any future estate, nor do any of the deeds which take effect by virtue of the statute of uses.¹

19. Though in one sense a deed of acquittance or release may be said to be an estoppel, as it is a valid and final bar to all existing claims, and all the possibilities arising from previous contracts of which it imports a relinquishment, it cannot affect rights of which the foundation is laid afterwards.² Thus, where one who was entitled to a contingent remainder conveyed the same, and afterwards the estate became vested, if the conveyance was by a quitclaim, his deed was no bar to his claiming the estate, if, with covenants of warranty, he was estopped to claim it. The contingency in this case, it may be remarked, consisted in the grantor's taking as the oldest surviving son at the death of his father.³ A *release [*467] of disseisee to a disseisor would be an effectual bar of his claim to the estate.⁴

20. And it may be laid down as a rule, that a grantor is estopped by his deed to say that he had no interest in the land.⁵ But to have this effect, the one who is estopped must have joined in the deed as a grantor therein, and must have been, moreover, capable of making a valid deed. Thus, where a husband made a deed, with covenants of warranty of his wife's estate, in which she joined by a clause relinquishing her right of dower, but not by words of grant, it was held that neither she nor her heirs were estopped thereby to claim the land, even at the end of twenty-nine years after making the deed.⁶ And where a deed was made to a *feme covert*, who, at the same

¹ Burt. Real Prop. § 593, note; Wms. Real Prop. 329, note; Jackson v. Wright, 14 Johns. 193; Jackson v. Brinckerhoff, 3 Johns. Cas. 101; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 407; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 624; Brown v. Jackson, 3 Wheat. 449; Kimball v. Blaisdell, 5 N. H. 535; Clark v. Baker, *sup.*; Dart v. Dart, 7 Conn. 250.

² Burt. Real Prop. § 149; Co. Lit. 285 a; Lit. § 446. See 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 624.

³ Robertson v. Wilson, 38 N. H. 48.

⁴ Perkins, § 86; 2 Prest. Conv. 269.

⁵ By Ashurst, J., in Fairtitle v. Gilbert, 2 T. R. 181; 2 Crabb, Real Prop. § 1048. See 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 624.

⁶ Raymond v. Holden, 2 Cush. 264. See Bruce v. Wood, 1 Met. 542; Wight v. Shaw, 5 Cush. 66.

time, made a mortgage to secure a part of the purchase-money, it was held to be a void deed of mortgage, since a *feme covert* could not make a deed.¹

21. But in this respect the estoppel is not reciprocal, for a grantee who holds an *executed* title under a deed, may deny his grantor's title in the same manner as he could that of a stranger.² And the doctrine of accepting a deed and taking possession under it, operating as an estoppel *in pais*, applies only where there is an obligation on him who accepts it, to return the possession, as in the case of lessor and lessee, mortgagor and mortgagee.³ Thus, in *Flagg v. Mann*, the deed under which the party claimed purported to convey the estate to him and another person, and it was held, that he was not thereby estopped to deny that the title passed to him and the other party as tenants in common. So if a disseisee take a deed from his disseisor, he is not thereby estopped to set up a former and better title.⁴ But in Georgia, in an action of ejectment, it was held, that if the defendant entered under the lessor of the plaintiff, whether by purchase, gift, or lease, or otherwise, he cannot dispute his title.⁵ So in Kentucky it was held, in an action of ejectment, that a party was estopped to deny the validity of the title of the one under whom he claims.⁶

22. And where, in an action of ejectment, the defendant claimed title under the plaintiff's own deed, the latter was held to be estopped to aver that it did not convey a title.⁷ And where a grantor in a deed to a school district, delivered the same to a committee who gave him their note for the purchase-money, he was estopped to deny their authority to accept it.⁸

¹ *Concord Bank v. Bellis*, 10 Cush. 276, 278.

² *Winlock v. Hardy*, 4 Lit. 272; *Moore v. Forrow*, 3 A. K. Marsh. 41; *Lewis v. Baird*, 3 McLean, 79; *Small v. Proctor*, 15 Mass. 499; *Sparrow v. Kingman*, 1 Comst. 242; *Callender v. Woodruff*, 11 Ark. 82. See the cases on both sides this question, and comments, in 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 655, 664; *Flagg v. Mann*, 14 Pick. 482; *Gardner v. Greene*, 5 R. I. 104.

³ *Gardner v. Greene*, 5 R. I. 110; *Willison v. Watkins*, 3 Peters, 48.

⁴ *Flagg v. Mann*, 14 Pick. 467, 482.

⁵ *Williams v. Cash*, 27 Geo. 312.

⁶ *Woolfolk v. Ashby*, 2 Met. (Ky.) 288.

⁷ *Cox v. Lacey*, 3 Litt. 334.

⁸ *Case v. Benedict*, 9 Cush. 540.

23. The distinction should be kept in mind, between an estoppel in evidence and an estoppel in point of estate, the application of which will appear by a reference to the following cases. Thus a deed poll cannot create an estoppel *in point of estate*. But if such a deed recites, that A by bond did so and so, the maker of the deed may not deny that there was such a bond.¹

24. And estoppels by recitals in deeds are, in some respects, as effectual as if they were actual warranties. As where the deed of a grantor recited that certain conveyances had been made to him, he could not, afterwards, deny that they had been made; nor could one deny this who claimed under such grantor.² It is upon this ground that if a party convey land, and in his deed describes it as bounded by a street, he would be estopped to deny that such a street existed, or that the grantor might use the same in connection with the land granted.³ But in *How v. Alger*, the court rest the decision in the above-cited cases, upon the fact that the grantor was, at the time of making his deed, the owner of the adjacent land described as the street or way.⁴

25. Where a party has solemnly admitted a fact by deed under his hand and seal, he is estopped not only from disputing the deed itself, but every fact which it recites.⁵ But if a deed be made by several owners of an estate in common, whatever recital as to title it contains, estops each grantor as to his own share only, and not as to the title of his co-grantors.⁶ And a stranger to a deed can never set up the

¹ *Shep. Touch. Prest. ed.* 53.

² *Kinsman v. Loomis*, 11 Ohio, 475, 478; 2 *Smith, Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 640; *Rangely v. Spring*, 28 Me. 142; *Farrar v. Cooper*, 34 Maine, 401; *Denn v. King, Cox*, 432; *Doe v. Howell*, 1 *Houst.* 183.

³ *Parker v. Smith*, 17 *Mass.* 413; *Emerson v. Wiley*, 10 *Pick.* 310; *O'Linda v. Lothrop*, 21 *Pick.* 292; *Tufts v. Charlestown*, 2 *Gray*, 271; *Farnsworth v. Taylor*, 9 *Gray*, 162; *Rodgers v. Parker*, 9 *Gray*, 445; *Vide post*, p. *671; *Thomas v. Poole*, 7 *Gray*, 83; *Loring v. Otis*, 7 *Gray*, 563.

⁴ 4 *Allen*, 210; *Matter of Lewis St.* 2 *Wend.* 472; *Livingston v. Mayor*, 8 *Wend.* 35; *Bellinger v. Burial Ground Soc.* 10 *Penn. St.* 137.

⁵ *Stow v. Wyse*, 7 *Conn.* 214; *Green v. Clark*, 13 *Verm.* 158; *Lajoie v. Primm*, 3 *Mo.* 373; *Douglas v. Scott*, 5 *Ohio*, 199; *Van Rensselaer v. Kearney*, 11 *How.* 332; *Clark v. Baker*, 14 *Cal.* 629.

⁶ *Sunderlin v. Struthers*, 47 *Penn. St.* 423, 424.

recitals therein, by the way of estoppel, as against a party to the deed.¹ So a mortgagor would be estopped to deny the fact of an entry having been made for condition broken, by the mortgagee, when he has signed a certificate to that effect on the deed.² But merely suffering the mortgagee to enter and record a certificate of such entry for a breach of the condition, does not, after the lapse of three years, estop the mortgagor to deny any breach, and to show that none had been made.³

26. So a party who traces his title through a regularly executed deed of conveyance, is concluded by its recitals.⁴

27. The general doctrine as to the effect of recitals and admissions in deeds, seems to be well stated thus. As to an admission of a fact, "if made for the purpose of influencing the conduct, or of deriving a benefit to another so that it cannot be denied without a breach of good faith, the law enforces the rule of good morals as a rule of policy, and precludes the party from repudiating his representations or denying the truth of his admissions."⁵

28. A few cases will serve to illustrate and apply the propositions thus generally stated. In the case of *Stow v. Wyse*,⁶ above cited, one made a deed of land belonging to a corporation, in which he described himself as agent, duly authorized to convey, &c., although this was not true. After that, he sued and recovered judgment against the company, and levied his execution upon the same land as belonging to the company, and then brought his action to recover the land from the grantee under the deed which he had executed as agent. It was held, that he was estopped to deny that he was the authorized agent, and that all persons claiming through or under him were equally estopped.⁷ So where a husband entered upon land as that of his wife, and held the same as tenant by cur-

¹ *Allen v. Allen*, 45 Penn. St. 473.

² *Bennett v. Conant*, 10 Cush. 163.

³ *Pettee v. Case*, 11 Gray, 478.

⁴ *Scott v. Douglass*, 7 Ohio, 227; *Carver v. Jackson*, 4 Pet. 85; *Douglass v. Scott*, 5 Ohio, 194.

⁵ *Douglass v. Scott*, 5 Ohio, 199; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 407; ante, pl. 9 b.

⁶ *Stow v. Wyse*, 7 Conn. 214.

⁷ See also *Huntington v. Havens*, 5 Johns. Ch. 23.

tesy, and her heirs conveyed the reversion to a third party, who brought waste against the husband, he was estopped to assert that his wife's title was defective, or to set up a title by disseisin against that under which he entered.¹ So where land originally belonging to G. C. became, as was assumed, the property of T. F. by conveyance, who gave G. C. a power of attorney to convey any land then belonging to T. F., and G. C., under that power, and, as the attorney of T. F., conveyed the land in question to the tenant, it was held, that the heirs of G. C., after his death, were estopped by this sale to set up a claim to the land, on the ground that when G. C. made the deed as T. F.'s attorney, T. F. was not the owner of the land, but that the same, in fact, belonged to G. C. The attorney in such a case, is estopped to dispute the title of his principal, for whom he acts.² There is, however, a marked distinction between general recitals in a deed and the recital of a particular fact; the former, as a general thing, does not conclude a party, while the latter may work an estoppel.³ In

**Eveleth v. Crouch*, one who has made a deed of grant [*469] with covenants of warranty, offered to show that he merely acted for the grantee herself, in acquiring and passing the estate. The court refused to allow the evidence, as to admit it would be to permit him directly to contradict his deed.⁴ In *Jackson v. Ireland*, the plaintiff claimed under a mortgage from John Ireland. The defendant was the mother of John, and claimed a life estate under the will of her husband and his father, John himself being one of the devisees of the same land. The husband held a contract for the land, from the city, when he died, but no deed had been delivered, and, after his death, the city made a deed to his widow and devisees, and under this deed John claimed his title. In this deed of the city, it was recited in the *habendum* to hold, &c., "in the manner mentioned in the said last will and testament of (the father) deceased." It was held that the mortgagees of John, claiming

¹ *Morgan v. Larned*, 10 Met. 53.

² *Harney v. Morton*, 36 Miss. 411.

³ *Huntington v. Havens*, 5 Johns. Ch. 23; Co. Lit. 352 b; *Shelley v. Wright, Willes*, 9; *Norton v. Saunders*, 7 J. J. Marsh. 14; *Hays v. Askew*, 5 Jones, Law, 63.

⁴ *Eveleth v. Crouch*, 15 Mass. 307, 309.

under him, were estopped by the recital in his deed from the city, and could not claim adversely to the widow.¹

29. And it is stated, generally, that a recital in a will operates as an estoppel to parties claiming under it.²

30. The whole law, as to the effect of recitals in deeds in the matter of estoppel, is considered in the case of *Douglass v. Scott*, which can only be understood by a full statement of the circumstances which raised the question. One Massie made a deed to the heirs of one Montgomery, who had entered under an agreement for a deed, and died in possession of the land. The heirs conveyed to Kerr by deed in usual form, with warranty, reciting the patent to Massie, and Massie's deed to them, and Kerr entered under this deed. Massie never had received his patent, and having died, it now was for the first time issued to his heirs. Douglass, prior to 1816, obtained a judgment and creditor's lien on the land against Kerr, which was kept alive, and he sold the land in 1821, and acquired a title [*470] under this *sale. In 1816, Kerr mortgaged the estate, and in his deed recited the title by patent in Massie, the sale by Massie to the Montgomery heirs, and their conveyance to him, Kerr. The land was sold under this mortgage and purchased by Scott, in 1823, and Kerr released to him, as did the trustees of the heirs of Massie, to whom the patent had issued. It turned out, moreover, that the deed from Massie to the Montgomery heirs was invalid for want of proper attestation. Under these circumstances Douglass brought a bill in equity to quiet his title. The court say: "The obligation created by estoppel not only binds the party making it, but all persons privy to him,—the legal representatives of the party,—those who stand in his situation by act of law, and all who take his estate by contract entered into in his stead, and are subjected to all the consequences which accrue to him. It adheres to the land, is transmitted with the estate, it becomes a muniment of title, and all who afterwards acquire the title, take it subject to the burden which the existence of the fact

¹ *Jackson v. Ireland*, 3 Wend. 99; *Tartar v. Hall*, 3 Cal. 263. The rule does not extend to that which is mere descriptive, or an averment which is not essential. *Osborne v. Endicott*, 6 Cal. 153.

² *Denn v. Cornell*, 3 Johns. Cas. 174.

imposes on it." They therefore held, in the first place, that Douglass acquired the legal title of Kerr by the sale under the judgment. In the next place they held, that the recital in Kerr's deed from Montgomery's heirs, that Massie had received a patent and had conveyed the estate to them, was one upon which he, Kerr, had a right to hold them bound, as an admission of the fact by which, as a party to the deed, he was himself bound, and that Kerr's assignee, claiming under him, was alike concluded; that the land was patented to Massie, and conveyed by him to the Montgomery heirs, was proved by their admission while they were owners and were disposing of the estate, "upon which all persons deriving title under them have a right to rely, and which conclude all persons to whom their estate is transmitted," and "that neither party, deriving title through this deed, is at liberty to question these facts." They accordingly held that Douglass had the better title.¹

*31. It is probably upon this principle of one being [*471] estopped by any representation deliberately made by him in his deed, that a grantor has not been admitted to controvert the fact that he owned an interest in the estate which he had thereby granted, in order to set up a claim thereto, adverse to the title of his grantee, where the grant is of land or an estate, and not a mere release of his interest or title to the same.² Thus, in *Jackson v. Murray*, the court say: "Russell" (the grantor, having no good title, though he had a contract for one), "cannot be allowed to say that his deed to Beach conveyed no interest."³ And in *Jackson v. Bull*, it was held, that "a man shall never be permitted to claim in opposition to his deed, by alleging he had no estate in the premises."⁴ It

¹ *Douglass v. Scott*, 5 Ohio, 199. See also *M'Cleskey v. Leadbetter*, 1 Ga. 551; *Denn v. Brewer, Coxe*, 172; *Denn v. King*, Id. 432; *Kinsman v. Loomis*, 11 Ohio, 475.

² By statute in California, one who conveys an estate in fee-simple absolute without having title, and afterwards acquires one, the same enures to the benefit of his grantee. Otherwise, if his deed be a quitclaim. *Morrison v. Wilson*, 30 Cal. 347.

³ *Jackson v. Murray*, 12 Johns. 201. See *Pike v. Galvin*, 29 Me. 183; 4 Kent, Com. 261, n.; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 637.

⁴ *Jackson v. Bull*, 1 Johns. Cas. 90; *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116, 119, 120; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 407, 408.

will be observed, there is no reference made in these cases to any existing covenants for title. So in *M'Williams v. Nisly et al.*, the plaintiff's ancestor conveyed the premises to the grantor of the tenant. The ground of the plaintiff's claim was, that when their ancestor conveyed the land, he had no title to it, but acquired one subsequently, in his lifetime, which had descended to them. Tilghman, C. J., says: "Can his heirs recover against his grantees? It appears to me that in such case they would be estopped by their father's deed from denying his title, and if there were occasion for further assurance, equity would compel them to make it." How far this equitable consideration had effect in determining the question, does not appear. But in the same case Gibson, J., says: "So in equity, a grantor conveying lands for which he has no title at the time, shall be considered trustee for the grantor, in case, at any time afterwards, he should acquire title." — "Chancery would compel them (the plaintiffs) to convey to the defendants."¹

[*472] *32. The doctrine, as stated by C. J. Tilghman, is recognized and declared in *Reeder v. Craig*. "If a man sell lands to which he has no title, and afterwards acquire a title, he is estopped by his first deed to say he had *no* title at the time of sale."² This subject is discussed with much discrimination by Field, C. J., in the case of *Clark v. Baker*, where Clark conveyed an estate to Baker, and took back a mortgage of the same for the purchase-money, neither deed containing covenants of warranty. The title of Clark was defective, and Baker, having bought in the outstanding title, made a second mortgage to one T., and the question was whether he could set up his after-acquired title against his mortgage to Clark. The court say, that at common law, there were only two classes of conveyances which were held to operate upon the after-acquired title, those by feoffment and by fine, or by common recovery. No other forms of convey-

¹ *M'Williams v. Nisly*, 2 Serg. & R. 507, 517, 518. See the remarks of Mr. Rawle upon this subject, in his work on Covenants, 3d ed. p. 409; Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 641, 651.

² *Reeder v. Craig*, 3 M'Cord, 411; *French v. Spencer*, 21 How. 228; *Washabaugh v. Entriken*, 34 Penn. St. 74.

ance, in the absence of covenants of warranty, had any effect in transferring the title subsequently acquired. In this country, no greater effect is given to a grant or a conveyance by bargain and sale, or lease or release, unaccompanied with covenants of warranty, than in England under the statute of uses. They pass only the estates which are vested in interest at the time, and do not bind or transfer, by way of estoppel, future or contingent estates. So far as *Jackson v. Bull*, and *Jackson v. Murray*, above cited, sustain a contrary doctrine, they have been overruled by subsequent cases. But where it distinctly appears upon the face of the instrument, without the presence of the covenant of warranty, either by recital or otherwise, that the intent of the parties was to convey and receive reciprocally a certain estate, the grantor will be estopped from denying the operation of the deed according to such intent. If the seisin or possession of a particular estate is affirmed in the deed, either in express terms or by necessary implication, the grantor, and all persons in privity with him, shall be estopped from ever afterwards denying that he was so seised and possessed at the time he made the conveyance. The estoppel works upon the estate, and binds an after-acquired title as between parties and privies. By the statute of California, conveyances under the statute of uses, where a fee-simple absolute is conveyed in land, of which the grantor has no legal estate at the time of making such conveyance, and the grantor subsequently acquires title to the same, the estate so acquired passes at once to the original grantee, creating in him a valid title and estate. And these doctrines were held to apply to cases of mortgage, estopping the mortgagor and his privies from setting up against his own mortgagor an after-acquired title to the estate.¹ So a deed to a company, describing them as a corporation, before, in fact, any act of incorporation had been passed, was held to estop the grantor to claim title against them upon their becoming incorporated.² In *Barber v. Harris*, there was a mortgage, and the question arose as to the extent of the mortgagor's title, whether

¹ *Clark v. Baker*, 14 Cal. 612; *Van Rensselaer v. Kearney*, 11 How. 322. So a similar statute and rule exists in Missouri. *Bogy v. Shoab*, 13 Mo. 379. See *Gibson v. Choteau*, 39 Mo. 568; also in Arkansas, *Cocke v. Brogan*, 5 Ark. 699; and in Illinois, *Frink v. Darst*, 14 Ill. 308.

² *Dyer v. Rich*, 1 Met. 180, 190.

it covered the entire estate, or a fractional part only. The court say: "The defendant having executed the mortgage under which the plaintiff claimed to recover the possession of the premises, was estopped from denying that he had title to them, and from setting up title in third persons."¹ And the Court of Massachusetts, while maintaining that if one grants "his right, title, claim, and demand" to an estate with covenants of warranty against all persons claiming by or under him, he may, nevertheless, set up a newly acquired title against his own grantor, recognize and approve of the doctrine that a grantor of an estate is estopped, by his conveyance, to deny that he had any title in the land at the time of the conveyance, and they hold that whatever interest he had, passed to the grantees by his deed.² On the other hand, it is laid down as a principle of universal application, that where a person assents to an act, and derives and enjoys a title under it, it shall not lie in his mouth to impeach it.³

33. There are a few exceptions to the effect given to recitals in deeds, one of which is found in the case where the deed containing the recital is, upon its face, a void one. There it does not work an estoppel.⁴ So if it be inoperative from any cause, as for want of proper execution, even if it contain [*473] covenants of *warranty.⁵ And though a party claiming title under a deed is barred by the recitals in such deed, he may show that the deed in which they are contained is inoperative, defective, and void.⁶

34. Another exception to the application of this rule is, where the other party who would enforce the estoppel, proposes to go behind the deed which contains the recitals, to defeat it. As where one holding a mortgage, took a deed of release from the mortgagor, reciting that its object was to cancel the mortgage, and a third person claimed title to the same land

¹ *Barber v. Harris*, 16 Wend. 615.

² *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116, 119, 120.

³ Per *Buller, J.*, *The King v. Stacey*, 1 T. R. 4.

⁴ *Sinclair v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 387; *Wallace v. Miner*, 6 Ohio, 366; *Concord Bank v. Bellis*, 10 Cush. 276; *Lowell v. Daniels*, 2 Gray, 161; *Cuthbertson v. Irving*, 4 H. & Norm. 754.

⁵ *Patterson v. Pease*, 5 Ohio, 190 - 192.

⁶ *Blake v. Tucker*, 12 Vern. 39.

through an attachment laid upon it between the date of the mortgage and that of the deed of release, the grantee, in such deed of release, was permitted to show that he still held under the mortgage by an agreement with the debtor to await the result of the attachment.¹

35. The most striking instances of an estoppel by deed, perhaps, are those where a party, without any title to land, undertakes to convey it, covenanting as to the title, and afterwards acquires title to the same land by descent or purchase.² If his covenant is such, of warranty, for instance, as to entitle the covenantee to recover for its breach, just as much of the covenantor, as he, the covenantor, would recover of the tenant, the covenantee, if he prevailed by enforcing his claim to the land, the law, to avoid circuity of action, allows the tenant to avail himself of this covenant to rebut the covenantor's claim upon the land, and prevents the grantor from setting up a claim to the estate by his after-acquired title. Or it may be placed, perhaps more properly, as it is sometimes insisted, upon the ground that the warranty of a grantor is as if a particular recital or averment had been inserted in his deed, and he was thereby estopped by his deed from denying its efficacy.³ This doctrine of after-acquired title enuring to the benefit of a prior grantee is applied in Louisiana to mortgages, so that if one mortgages land without having any title to the estate, and afterwards acquire one, it enures to the benefit of the mortgagee.⁴ But without stopping to *discuss the precise manner in [*474] which this is effected, the cases are numerous establishing the general principle that such is the effect, although they do not agree in the point whether certain of the usual covenants in deeds do or do not operate to work estoppels against the covenantors. The subject may hereafter be resumed, when

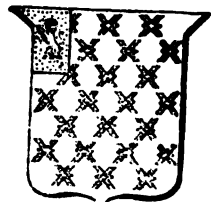
¹ *Crosby v. Chase*, 17 Me. 369.

² *Nunnally v. White*, 3 Met. (Ky.) 589.

³ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 422; *Co. Lit.* 265 a; *Dart v. Dart*, 7 Conn. 256; *Jackson v. Bradford*, 4 Wend. 619; 4 Kent, Com. 261, note; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 626, 627; *Somes v. Skinner*, 3 Pick. 52, 61; *Oakes v. Marcy*, 10 Pick. 195, 199; *White v. Patten*, 24 Pick. 324. See *Blanchard v. Ellis*, 1 Gray, 195; *Jackson v. Hubble*, 1 Cow. 613, 617; *Jackson v. Waldron*, 13 Wend. 189; *Kimball v. Blaisdell*, 5 N. H. 535; *Bogy v. Shoab*, 13 Mo. 378; *Wade v. Lindsey*, 6 Met. 413; *Cole v. Raymond*, 9 Gray, 217; *Mickles v. Townsend*, 18 N. Y. 577.

⁴ *Amonett v. Amis*, 16 La. An. 227.

[481]



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the covenants in deeds are considered. For the present, it will be sufficient to refer to a few of the leading authorities upon the subject, without undertaking, generally, to draw a line between a technical rebutter and an estoppel, which the reader will find elaborately discussed by Mr. Rawle, in the ninth chapter of his valuable treatise on Covenants for Title.¹ Lord Coke, in treating of a release, while commenting upon Littleton's statement, that "no right passeth by a release but the right which the releasor hath at the time of the release made," speaks of a release accompanied by a warranty, and remarks: "The warranty may rebut and bar him (the warrantor) and his heirs of a future right which was not in him at the time." He puts the case of a grandfather, father, and son, where the father disseises the grandfather, and then makes a feoffment in fee, and the grandfather afterwards dies. The father, in such a case, might not enter upon his feoffee against his own feoffment, though the son might upon his death. It is said there is no English authority that any other conveyance than a feoffment, fine, or lease operates by way of estoppel to pass an after-acquired title.² "And so note a diversity between a release, a feoffment, and a warranty. A release, in that case, is void. A feoffment is good against the feoffor, but not against his heir. A warranty is good both against himself and his heirs."³

36. The same doctrine is adopted in Connecticut, though there is this difference between a release there and in England, that in the latter it is a secondary conveyance, deriving its validity and effect from the possession of the releasee, in the former it is a primary one, and passes the releasor's right like a grant, and operates as a conveyance without a warranty. If made with a warranty, the releasor is estopped to claim the land. The same principle applies in New York⁴ and Massachusetts.⁵

[*475] *37. The cases are numerous where courts have held, that if one without any title makes a deed of land with covenants of warranty, and afterwards acquires a

¹ Rawle, Cov. ch. 9.

² Gibson v. Chouteau, 39 Mo. 566; Valle v. Clemens, 18 Mo. 486.

³ Co. Lit. 265 a.

⁴ Dart v. Dart, 7 Conn. 256; Jackson v. Wright, 14 Johns. 193.

⁵ Trull v. Eastman, 3 Met. 121; Butler v. Seward, 10 Allen, 468.

title to the same, it will enure to the grantee and covenantee by way of estoppel. Some of these are cited below.¹ The effect is, that the title acquired by the grantor who has conveyed with warranty, enures *eo instanti* that he gains the title, to his grantee, and vests in him, or to the grantee of such grantee if with like covenants.² But if before the covenantor acquires a title, the covenantee sue for a breach of the covenant of seisin, it seems that he could not defeat that action by purchasing in the title and tendering it to his covenantee, if the latter refuse to accept it. In the case cited below, the tender was made six years after the original deed.³ But if the title, in such a case, comes to the covenantor in the capacity of trustee, and not in his own right, it would not enure to the prior covenantee. The estoppel would not apply in such a case.⁴

38. The covenant need not be a general covenant of warranty, but will always work an estoppel to the extent of its terms. Thus, where there was a covenant of warranty against a particular title which the grantor afterwards acquired, he was estopped to set it up.⁵ So where one conveys with covenant against encumbrances, and afterwards buys in an outstanding mortgage, or purchases the estate under a sale for foreclosure of a mortgage existing thereon prior to his convey-

¹ *Jackson v. Stevens*, 13 Johns. 316; *Brown v. McCormick*, 6 Watts, 60, where the deed was with covenants of warranty, although the court do not refer to that circumstance. *Jackson v. Matsdorf*, 11 Johns. 91; *Somes v. Skinner*, 3 Pick. 52, 60; *Terrett v. Taylor*, 9 Cranch, 43; *Wark v. Willard*, 18 N. H. 389; *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116, 119; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 121, 124; *White v. Patten*, 24 Pick. 324; *Allen v. Parish*, 3 Ohio, 107; *Bond v. Swearingen*, 1 Ohio, 190; *Lawry v. Williams*, 13 Me. 281; *Jackson v. Hoffman*, 9 Cow. 271; 5 Prest. Abat. 210; *Jackson v. Wright*, 14 Johns. 193; *Baxter v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 260; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 626, for a collection of American cases to the same effect. *Blanchard v. Ellis*, 1 Gray, 198; *Clark v. Baker*, 14 Cal. 630; *Van Rensselaer v. Kearney*, 11 How. 322; *Perry v. Kline*, 12 Cush. 118; *Goodson v. Beacham*, 24 Ga. 150; *O'Bannon v. Paremour*, Id. 489; *Chamberlain v. Meeder*, 16 N. H. 381; post, p. *667; 12 Am. Law Reg. 146, note; *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 353; post, *667; *Kimball v. Schoff*, 40 N. H. 190; *Burton v. Reeds*, 20 Ind. 93.

² *Crocker v. Pierce*, 31 Me. 177, 182; post, *667.

³ *Tucker v. Clarke*, 2 Sandf. ch. 96.

⁴ *Burchard v. Hubbard*, 11 Ohio, 316; *Kelley v. Jenness*, 50 Me. 455, 464.

⁵ *Blake v. Tucker*, 12 Verm. 39; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 121; *Kimball v. Blaisdell*, 5 N. H. 535.

ance, whatever title he acquires thereby enures to the benefit of his grantee.¹

39. But a covenant, to have this effect, must be something more than the personal covenant of him who makes it. It must be of a nature to run with the land, and if it be, it will attach to the land and run with it, the instant the covenantor acquires the title which he has undertaken to convey by his deed.² The covenantee may, moreover, estop himself from setting up the covenant of his grantor, by the way of claiming the estate. If the purchaser under a deed with general covenants of warranty, be evicted by a better title, it is not in the grantor's power afterwards to acquire a title to the premises, and compel the grantee to accept the same against his will. Whether the grantee has the election, after such eviction, to claim such acquired title by estoppel, the court in the case cited avoid determining. But if, instead of claiming the land, the purchaser sues upon his covenants, and recovers damages for a breach thereof, he would be estopped thereby from claiming the land by estoppel, though his grantor and covenantor should have acquired it.³

39 *a*. Nor will such covenant prevent the grantor from subsequently acquiring a title to the granted premises, and availing himself of it against his own grantee, if the title conveyed by such grant was, at the time, a good one. Thus, where the grantor disseised his own grantee, and held adverse possession for twenty years, it was held, that he was not estopped by his former deed and covenant, to claim title to the premises by such disseisin.⁴

40. So the effect of the covenant will be limited in its extent by the premises granted, and with which it may run; as where the grantor, owning one undivided sixth part of certain premises, conveyed all his estate in the premises, and covenanted against the claims of all persons to the estate, he was only

¹ *Brundred v. Walker*, 1 Beasley (N. J.), 140.

² *Patterson v. Pease*, 5 Ohio, 190, 192; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 121; *Wheelock v. Henshaw*, 19 Pick. 341; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 640.

³ *Blanchard v. Ellis*, 1 Gray, 195; *Porter v. Hill*, 9 Mass. 34. See post, p. *673. See *Baxter v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 260.

⁴ *Stearns v. Hendersass*, 9 Cush. 502; *Parker v. Proprs. of Locks, &c.* 3 Met. 102; *Smith v. Montes*, 11 Texas, 24; *Tilton v. Emery*, 17 N. H. 538.

estopped as to his sixth, and not as to any other shares which he afterwards acquired.¹ So where there was a recital of an outstanding mortgage in a deed of the premises, with covenants of warranty, it was held, that the covenant was qualified by such recital.² Upon this ground, where the grant is in the *form of a release and quitclaim of all the [*476] grantor's right, claim, or title to the land described, with a covenant of warranty against all persons claiming by or under him, while he would be thereby estopped to claim any title existing in him at the time of making his deed, he would not be as to any after-acquired title.³ The reader will remark the distinction between this case and that where the grantor conveys the land or estate itself without limiting his conveyance to such right as he has. So that the cases cited below do not conflict with the doctrine of estoppel stated in some of the former cases, that a man may not aver anything contrary to his express recitals in his deed, and after having expressly conveyed land itself to which he has no title, afterwards avoid his own deed by claiming the land under a subsequently acquired title. So where one who took by devise a vested remainder in a certain part of an estate, and a contingent remainder in another part, granted, bargained, and sold all his right, title, and interest in the estate, with covenants of warranty, it was held that the grant was answered by the vested interest he had, and did not estop him from claiming that part in which he had a contingent remainder, which subsequently became vested in interest and possession.⁴

41. It is upon the grounds above stated that it has been held, that, in order to bar a party by his covenant of warranty, not only must the deed be a good and valid deed in its form and mode of execution,⁵ but it must convey no title to the premises

¹ *Wight v. Shaw*, 5 Cush. 56; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 121, 123.

² *Jackson v. Hoffman*, 9 Cow. 271.

³ *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116, 119, 120; *Jackson v. Peek*, 4 Wend. 300; *Miller v. Ewing*, 6 Cush. 34, 40; *Kinsman v. Loomis*, 11 Ohio, 475; *Ham v. Ham*, 14 Me. 351; *Coe v. Persons Unknown*, 43 Me. 432; *Pike v. Galvin*, 29 Me. 183; *Doane v. Wilcatt*, 5 Gray, 328, 333; *Harriman v. Gray*, 49 Me. 538.

⁴ *Blanchard v. Brooks*, 12 Pick. 47, 66; *Wynn v. Harman*, 5 Gratt. 157; *White v. Brocaw*, 14 Ohio St. 344.

⁵ By the term "interest," as above used, it seems, is intended a *vested* interest.

nor pass anything upon which the warranty can operate, for if it passes a title or interest, the covenant does not operate as an estoppel, even though it cannot operate upon the interest to the full extent of the intention of the parties.¹ So [*477] *where A, having only an equitable fee in land, mortgaged it by lease and release to B, covenanting that he was legally *or* equitably seised, and reciting that he was legally *or* equitably entitled to the premises, and the legal estate was afterwards conveyed to him, and by him was sold to C, it was held, that he was not estopped to set up his after-acquired legal estate, either by his covenant or his recital, they being in the alternative, and not positive affirmations that it was a legal interest to which he was entitled, and that the words of release in his deed only operated to pass whatever interest he had in the premises at the time.² And where the grant was of all the grantor's right, title, and interest in certain premises, with covenants that neither the grantor nor any person claiming under him should claim, &c., there was held to be a qualified warranty of the land and premises conveyed. The warranty was coextensive with the estate which the deed purported to convey, but as that did not purport to convey any interest thereafter to be acquired, it did not affect any after-acquired title.³

42. But where one, as guardian, conveyed lands and entered into covenants of warranty as to the title, in his deed, he was held to be thereby estopped from setting up a personal claim to the same land under his own title.⁴

43. This doctrine of estoppel by warranty applies to cases of conveyances of their lands by married women joining with their husbands. For though in such cases the wife is not personally liable upon her covenant, she and those claiming under her, are estopped, in the same manner as if she were a *feme sole*,

Blanchard v. Brooks, 12 Pick. 47; 2 Saund. 388 d; 2 Prest. Abst. 410; Patterson v. Pease, 5 Ohio, 190; Karcheval v. Triplett, 1 A. K. Marsh. 493; Dougal v. Fryer, 3 Mo. 29.

¹ Lewis v. Baird, 3 McLean, 56, 78, 79; 4 Kent, Com. 98; Jackson v. Hoffman, 9 Cow. 271; 2 Prest. Abst. 216.

² Right v. Bucknell, 2 B. & Ad. 278.

³ Miller v. Ewing, 6 Cush. 34, 40; Doane v. Wilcutt, 5 Gray, 328, 333; Raymond v. Raymond, 10 Cush. 134; Gee v. Moore, 14 Cal. 472; Gibbs v. Thayer, 6 Cush. 32; Newcomb v. Presbrey, 8 Met. 406.

⁴ Heard v. Hall, 16 Pick. 457.

against setting up an after-acquired title to the land conveyed.¹ But the extent of the doctrine of estoppel, as applied to married women, does not seem to be very well defined. That the doctrine of estoppel *in pais* does not apply to the estates of married women, is expressly affirmed in one case.² And in the case cited of *Jackson v. Vanderheyden*, the court say, that though a deed with covenants of warranty by husband and wife of the wife's land would convey her real estate, or any existing or contingent future interest in it, "such deed cannot operate as an estoppel to her subsequently acquired interest in the same land." The court, in *Wight v. Shaw*,³ refer to the last-mentioned case with apparent approbation, but do not decide the point, nor refer to the case cited below of *Nash v. Spofford*, where the point that, by joining with her husband in a deed with covenants of warranty she did estop herself, was expressly decided, and where the cases of *Fowler v. Shearer*, and *Colcord v. Swan*⁴ were referred to as sustaining the doctrine. And all the cases seem to agree that a married woman would not, at common law, be personally liable upon covenants contained in the deed of herself and husband. The case of *Wadleigh v. Glines* was also cited in that of *Nash v. Spofford*, and this again depended upon the case of *Jackson v. Vanderheyden*, and goes to sustain the doctrine above advanced, that though a married woman is not bound by covenants in her and her husband's deed of her land, it would estop her from claiming the land by any title she had at the making of the deed, but not against a title subsequently acquired.⁵ In a later case in Massachusetts, the court held a married woman who conveyed lands held under the statute to her sole and separate use, bound by her covenants as if she were at the time sole and unmarried.⁶ And upon the principle of estoppel *in pais*, the courts in Illinois hold

¹ *Hill v. West*, 8 Ohio, 222; *Colcord v. Swan*, 7 Mass. 291; *Nash v. Spofford*, 10 Met. 192; *contra*, *Jackson v. Vanderheyden*, 17 Johns. 167. See *Morrison v. Wilson*, 13 Cal. 494.

² *Morrison v. Wilson*, *sup.* See also *Lowell v. Daniels*, 2 Gray, 168-170; *ante*, *459.

³ *Wight v. Shaw*, 5 Cush. 67.

⁴ *Nash v. Spofford*, 10 Met. 192; *Fowler v. Shearer*, 7 Mass. 14; *Colcord v. Swan*, *sup.*

⁵ *Wadleigh v. Glines*, 6 N. H. 17.

⁶ *Basford v. Pearson*, 7 Allen, 505.

that a wife may be estopped to claim homestead where she and her husband join in a deed of the premises, and then abandon them.¹ But in Iowa and Kentucky, it is held that a wife joining with her husband in a deed of warranty does not estop her to claim under an *after-acquired* title.² And by statute in Indiana, a wife is not bound by the covenants in a deed made by her and her husband.³

44. This doctrine of estoppel applies also to leases for years, and, it would seem, with greater force, if possible, than [*478] to deeds *poll. Thus, if a person execute an indenture purporting to *demise* land for a term, in which he has no estate in fact, or no estate by a good legal title, and the want of such estate does not appear upon the instrument, the lease will operate upon any interest which he may afterwards acquire in the same land during the continuance of the term. But it is requisite that it should be an indenture, in order to bind both parties and make the estoppel reciprocal, while, if any valid interest, however short it may be of that pretended, actually passes from the lessor to the lessee, the lease works no estoppel against him.⁴

45. The case put by Coke is this: A, tenant for life of B, makes a lease for twenty years, and then buys the reversion. B then dies. A may enter and avoid his own lease by virtue of his newly-acquired title. But had he had no title when he made the lease, and he then acquired one, he could not have contradicted his own lease and say it was wholly void.⁵

46. Indeed, the proposition is laid down as a general one, applicable alike to all conveyances, that if the conveyance be

¹ *Brown v. Coon*, 36 Ill. 243, 246.

² *Childs v. McChesney*, 20 Iowa, 431; *Nunnally v. White*, 3 Met. (Ky.) 593.

³ *Baxter v. Bodkin*, 25 Ind. 172.

⁴ *Shep. Touch*, Prest. ed. 53; *Burt. Real Prop.* § 650; *Wms. Real Prop.* 229, 230; *Hermitage v. Tomkins*, 1 Ld. Raym. 729; 4 Kent, Com. 261, and note; *Jackson v. Bull*, 1 Johns. Cas. 90; *Co. Lit.* 47 b; 2 Prest. Abst. 410. See *Ischam v. Morrice*, Cro. Car. 109. "Grant and demise," in an indenture of lease, are equivalent to covenants of warranty and of quiet enjoyment. *Barney v. Keith*, 4 Wend. 502.

⁵ See *Wms. Real Prop.* 330. Equity would, in the case supposed, compel the lessor to make good his lease as a contract. *Co. Lit.* 47 b, note 307. By the purchase of the land, that is turned into a lease in interest, which before was merely an estoppel.

rightful, and such as derives its validity from the statute of uses, it passes only what he has who makes it, while if it is wrongful, as by feoffment, fine, and the like, it operates to bar the estate which may afterwards be in the one making it,¹ though it would seem that the distinction should always be observed between the conveyance of a particular parcel of estate by description, and of the right or title that the grantor has in it.

47. On the other hand, a man by accepting a lease by indenture from a stranger, may bind himself to be treated as the lessor's tenant, and to pay him rent during the term purported *to be granted by the lease, unless he may have [*479] been induced by the fraudulent representation to accept the lease.² And where one in possession of land covenanted with A B to purchase it of him, but failed to do so, and A B brought ejectment for the land, it was held that the tenant was estopped by his covenant to set up an outstanding title against the claim of the plaintiff.³

48. When it is inquired how far estoppels extend, and who are bound by them, it will be found, as has been partially anticipated, that, in the first place, they operate neither in favor of nor against strangers, but affect only parties and privies in blood, in estate, or in law, and a stranger can neither take advantage of, nor be bound by, an estoppel,⁴ though it is not always easy to draw the line between privies and strangers. Accordingly, where one who had been disseised, conveyed the land by deed to a stranger, and then sued his disseisor for possession, it was held, that his deed to a stranger did not estop him from maintaining the action.⁵ So where the deed to the stranger passed nothing for want of proper execution, the tenant, not a party to it, cannot avail himself of it.⁶

¹ 2 Prest. Abst. 411.

² 2 Prest. Abst. 210; *Alderson v. Miller*, 15 Gratt. 279; *Jackson v. Ayers*, 14 Johns. 225.

³ *Jackson v. Ayers*, 14 Johns. 224; *Walker v. Sedgwick*, 8 Cal. 403.

⁴ *Doe v. Errington*, 6 Bing. n. c. 79; *Jackson v. Bull*, 1 Johns. Cas. 90; *Jackson v. Brinckerhoff*, 3 Johns. Cas. 103; *Miller v. Holman*, 1 Grant's Cas. 243; *Jackson v. Bradford*, 4 Wend. 623; *Kimball v. Blaisdell*, 5 N. H. 535; *Sunderlin v. Struthers*, 47 Penn. St. 423.

⁵ *Wolcott v. Knight*, 6 Mass. 418; *Jackson v. Brinckerhoff*, 3 Johns. Cas. 103.

⁶ *Patterson v. Pease*, 5 Ohio, 190.

49. But a person in possession, sustaining his possession by no other title than a denial that a former owner had parted with his right, is not a stranger. He becomes privy in estate to him whose title he maintains, and is concluded by what destroys that in his hands. For if title can be traced by B to A, and B can fasten upon A the incapacity of asserting his right in consequence of his admission that he has conveyed to B, it is not just that one standing on A's claim only, and relying on no superior right, should be permitted to contest the existence of a fact which those interested have settled.¹

50. So where one conveys lands with warranty, but without title, and afterwards acquires one, his first deed works an estoppel, and passes an estate to the grantee, the instant the [*480] *grantor acquires his title, not only against the grantor and those claiming under him, but also against strangers who come in after the deed creating the estoppel.² And such title would enure to the benefit of the first grantee by estoppel, to the exclusion of a second grantee, to whom the grantor shall execute a deed after having acquired a title,³ though it has been insisted that such a construction does violence to the spirit of the system of registration of deeds, which ordinarily requires, that in taking a title, one should only go back to the time his grantor acquired it, and to see that no *intermediate* encumbrance or conveyance shall have been made by him.⁴

51. It may, accordingly, be stated as a general proposition, that any person claiming under one who is bound by an estoppel, is himself bound by the same estoppel.⁵ Thus, in the case of *Wark v. Willard*, above cited, a purchaser from one who had made a prior deed with warranty, of land to which he afterwards had acquired a title, was estopped by the first deed as

¹ *Kinsman v. Loomis*, 11 Ohio, 478; *Easter v. L. M. Railroad*, 14 Ohio St. 52, 54; *Morse v. Aldrich*, 19 Pick. 449; *Whatman v. Gibson*, 9 Sim. 196.

² *Somes v. Skinner*, 3 Pick. 52, 60.

³ *White v. Patten*, 24 Pick. 324. But see *Chamberlain v. Meeder*, 16 N. H. 381, if mortgaged back at the same time with the purchase, the mortgage would take precedence of the title by estoppel.

⁴ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 430.

⁵ *Phelps v. Blofant*, 2 Dev. 177. See *Douglass v. Scott*, 5 Ohio, 199; *Wark v. Willard*, 13 N. H. 389; *Maple v. Kussart*, 53 Penn. St. 351.

well as his grantor, although it had never been recorded, provided he had notice of its existence when he took his deed. Where A, by a deed of mortgage with warranty, conveyed his estate, upon which there was an outstanding mortgage, and A purchased this, and took an assignment of it to himself in his own right, it was held, that this latter mortgage enured to the benefit of A's mortgagee with covenants.¹ But if, after having made a conveyance with warranty without having title, the estate comes to him as a mere conduit in passing it from its owner through him to another person, it does not enure to the benefit of his original grantee.²

52. There is one other act of parties which may operate in the nature of an estoppel, not in conveying a title to lands from one to another, but in quieting titles so as to estop any adverse claim, and that is by arbitrament and award, where the parties have submitted to arbitrators the question of property in lands, and an award upon the point has been made and published. Such award is conclusive as to their respective rights of property, even though the submission and award were by parol.³

53. It should be stated, that the original propriety of adopting the rule as one of law, that covenants of warranty contained *in deeds of conveyance, should operate as [*481] an estoppel to bind an after-acquired title, where the covenantor, at the time of making his deed, had none, is examined and criticised with great learning and ability by Mr. Hare, in the American edition of Smith's Leading Cases, in which he remarks: "Notwithstanding the formidable array of authorities which support this view of the question, it is proper to point out the difficulties with which it is attended, and its apparent inconsistency with those principles of the common law on which it is assumed to be founded. It is hardly too much to say, that there is nothing either in Rawlyns' case,⁴ nor in any

¹ *Kelley v. Jenness*, 50 Me. 455.

² *Kelley v. Jenness*, *sup.*; *Runlet v. Otis*, 2 N. H. 167; *Marsh v. Rice*, 1 N. H. 167.

³ *Doe v. Prosser*, 3 East, 15; *Goodridge v. Dustin*, 5 Met. 363, 367; *Trustee v. Yewre*, Cro. Eliz. 223; *Baker v. Townsend*, 7 Taunt. 422; *Shelton v. Alcox*, 11 Conn. 240; *Bowen v. Cooper*, 7 Watts, 311; *Shepard v. Ryers*, 15 Johns. 497; *Carey v. Wilcox*, 6 N. H. 177; *Watson*, Arb. 38, 39; 2 Smith, *Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 650.

⁴ *Rawlyns' case*, 4 Rep. 52.

other of the earlier or more recent English authorities, to justify the belief that warranty is the sole cause of estoppel in the conveyance of land, or even that the one can arise in any case out of the other."¹ And the court of Georgia, following the suggestions of the above annotator, declare, in an opinion by Lumpkin, J. : "The conclusion of the whole matter is, that where lands are sold by any of the modern conveyances, in which the grantor had nothing at the period of executing the deed, the title which he may subsequently acquire, does not pass to the grantee by estoppel, nor entitle him to recover in ejectment brought against a stranger ; that a conveyance made under such circumstances, does not debar the warrantor or his heirs from recovering under any right or title not vested in the grantor at the time of making the conveyance ; that the doctrine of estoppel in deeds cannot be based upon that of warranty."² In the very work cited by the court of Georgia, it seems to be conceded, that this rule, which the writer controverts, is the settled rule of the American law, as generally adopted, and as it should be the object of a work like the present to state the law as it is, rather than to discuss in the abstract what it ought to be, the principle contained in the cases cited, and in many others that might be referred to, is treated as the existing rule of law, notwithstanding the summary reversal which it has met with in the above ruling, in *Way v. Arnold*.

¹ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 626. ² *Way v. Arnold*, 18 Ga. 192, 193.

*SECTION VII.

[*482]

POSSESSION AND LIMITATION.

1. Possession as evidence of title.
2. How possession becomes an absolute title.
- 3, 4. Nature and character of seisin.
5. Who is in law a disseisor.
6. When one may be a disseisor by election.
7. How far seisin and possession are identical.
8. When seisin follows possession.
9. Of seisin, whether in deed or in law.
10. Disseisin defined, and its effect on title.
11. Intent essential to constitute a disseisin.
12. Seisin may be regained by re-entry.
13. Effect of "descent cast," upon regaining seisin.
14. Effect upon seisin, of the disseisor's abandoning possession.
15. *Taylor v. Horde*, — the questions therein involved.
16. Effect of deeds recorded in passing seisin.
17. What entry and possession will give a title.
18. Title gained by possession always a fee.
19. Requisites of possession to give a title.
- 19 a. Same subject.
20. Possession must be actual with intent to gain title.
21. The possession must be continued.
22. It must be visible, notorious, distinct, and definite.
23. It must be hostile or adverse.
24. Possession by one of two owners, presumed not to be adverse.
25. When possession rightfully taken may become adverse.
26. Cases illustrative of such possession as gives title.
27. Seisin once gained, presumed to continue.
28. When possession of successive holders gained by disseisin may be united.
29. The one in possession may convey land by deed with covenants, &c.
30. Disseisin of a particular tenant, does not affect reversioner.
- 31, 32. Cases illustrating what would be open exclusive possession.
33. What acts on land constitute a disseisin in themselves.
34. How far disseisin by erecting buildings extends.
35. Disseisin limited to actual ouster and possession.
36. How far entry under a deed defines the limits of a disseisin.
37. How far the limits of one disseisor affected by possession of another.
38. Upon what ground the law protects title by disseisin.
39. Rule where the act of disseisin is equivocal.

- 40. Mere possession does not give title.
- 41. Limitation not applicable against the State.
- 42. Possession to give title, must not be opposed by owner.
- 43. Effect of adverse occupation, where no actual ouster.
- 44. Effect of occupation as purchaser, without deed.
- 45. Effect of such occupation after partition made.
- 46. Effect on title of occupation by *cestui que trust*.
- 46 a. Limitation as affecting trusts.
- 47. Possession by purchaser without deed, when a presumptive title.
- 48. Effect of adverse possession to establish an absolute title.
- 49. Local statutes of limitation.
- 50. Limitation as affected by personal disabilities.

1. Possession as an element of title has already been mentioned. As theoretically constituting the origin of title in a primitive state of society, and as serving a no less important agency in the evidence it affords in establishing title under the more complex and arbitrary rules of property in its advanced stages in organized States, it now becomes proper to consider the subject: although it is not proposed to enter into any discussion of the grounds upon which the theory of individual property in the general heritage of the earth, can be maintained. It is sufficient to state, that whoever is in possession of real property, is so far regarded by law as the owner thereof, that no one can lawfully dispossess him of the same, without showing some well-founded title of a higher and better character than such possession itself furnishes.¹

2. It may be further remarked, that possession, however naked, may become an absolute title, or conclusive evidence of a title, under the operation of that policy of the law which, for the peace of the community, does not allow a possession to be questioned, after it shall have been enjoyed for such a length of time as renders it unreasonable, in the eye of the law, to require evidence, *aliunde*, that it was holden under a right of ownership derived from some other sufficient and legitimate source. What this time shall be, is regulated by rules prescribed by statute, varying according to the judgment of each particular State, expressed through its legislation. But, as will more fully appear in the sequel, in order that a possession of lands should have the effect which is above sug-

¹ 2 Sharw. Bl. Com. 196 and note; Wood, Civil Law, 78, 126.

gested, it must be maintained during the requisite period of time, as a right resulting from an exclusive property in, and dominion over, the estate, and not subordinate to the will of any other person. *Such a possession as this [*488] would answer to the common-law notion of seisin, and is of even broader significance, since it implies the seisin of an estate in fee-simple, while, at common law, seisin may be predicated of any freehold estate, whether of inheritance or not. As the instances of acquiring title by possession to vacant or derelict lands are too rare to be taken into account in treating of law as an existing institution, it seems the readiest way to arrive at the rules which govern the ownership of estates, as affected by possession, to consider the subject, — first, under the head of seisin and disseisin; second, as to the effect of lapse of time in perfecting a title begun by that tortious act to which the feudal and common law give the name of disseisin; and third, in view of the cases where, by analogy, a possession under a claim of ownership has been held to confer a title, though not originally gained by any tortious dispossession of another.

3. It was attempted, in a former part of this work, to define in what seisin, at common law, consisted, and how it might be acquired and lost, and it is not intended to repeat what was there said.¹

4. It may be well to bear in mind that there can be but one actual seisin of an estate. It may be held by several persons at the same time, but it is still in itself one and indivisible. Two persons cannot be actually seised of the same land, claiming it by title adverse to each other. So there may be what answers to actual seisin when used in respect to expectant estates like reversions, dependent upon estates to which the immediate, actual seisin is united. But that is not the seisin which grows out of the possession of land, and constitutes him in whom it is vested the recognized tenant of the freehold, within the meaning and theory of the feudal and common law.²

5. Now if any one usurps this right of seisin and possession, and exercises the powers and privileges of such tenant of the free-

¹ Vol. 1, pp. *32–*39; *Langdon v. Potter*, 3 Mass. 215.

² Com. Dig. Seisin, A. 1, A. 2; *Cornell v. Jackson*, 3 Cush. 508.

hold, and thereby keeps out or displaces him to whom these rightfully belong, he is, in the eye of the law, a disseisor. And an infant may be a disseisor by entering and holding [*484] possession.¹ Of *course, to complete the disseisin, that is, to divest the seisin from the one and invest the other with it, there was originally required to be such a recognition of the disseisor by the lord under whom he claimed to hold, and by the other tenants, as constituted him one of the *pares curiæ* of the lord's court, thus rendering an actual disseisin a complex operation, involving something more than the mere tortious act of entry by one upon another's possession, whereby the latter was deprived of that which he had hitherto enjoyed; though it will not be attempted to show precisely how this was accomplished.² Though there are no such tests, at the present day, to determine whether a tenant has been disseised or not, as might have been applied while the feudal organization of manors, with their incidents, continued in force, yet the same general notion is associated with an actual disseisin, as prevailed under the feudal regime, that, as to all persons except him whose seisin has been wrongfully divested, the tenant is to be deemed the owner of the inheritance. And this is further sustained by the course of modern legislation, which forbids any one to question this ownership after a prescribed period of acquiescence.³

6. It should, however, be constantly borne in mind, that though, for purposes of remedy, if the dominion over, and free enjoyment of, the real property of any one is wrongfully interfered with or disturbed, he may, at his election, often treat the wrongdoer as a disseisor, although not himself actually ousted or dispossessed,⁴ yet, that the act which makes one a disseisor by election is not an actual disseisin, such as will, under the effect of the statute of limitations, ripen into an indefeasible

¹ *Lackman v. Wood*, 25 Cal. 151.

² Co. Lit. 266 b, Butler's note, 217; 2 Prest. Abst. 284; Com. Dig. Seisin, F. 1; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 405.

³ *Lund v. Parker*, 3 N. H. 49; *Newhall v. Wheeler*, 7 Mass. 189; *Slator v. Rawson*, 6 Met. 439, 443; *Coburn v. Hollis*, 3 Met. 125, 128.

⁴ *Smith v. Bartis*, 6 Johns. 215; 2 Prest. Abst. 287; *Stearns*, Real Act. 14; 2 *Sulliv. Lect.* 157; *Taylor v. Horde*, 1 Burr. 60; *Prescott v. Nevers*, 4 Mason, 329; *Prop. of No. 6 v. M'Farland*, 12 Mass. 327.

title to land.¹ But if the disseisee by election seeks to recover a judgment for title and possession against him whom he sues as a disseisor, he must abandon possession of the premises while the action is pending, otherwise, the tenant may plead that the plaintiff has entered and disseised him, and thus abate the process.²

7. Several of the points incidentally suggested in what has *been said above, will be found to be fully [*485] sustained by Wilde, J., in the case of *Slater v. Rawson*, where there was an entry upon and claim to land by one party, but, being woodland, and uninclosed, the true owner was held not to be thereby in any manner dispossessed, the court saying: "It is true that two adverse parties cannot both be seised of the same land at the same time. But if A enters on the land of B, without ousting him, or doing some act equivalent to an ouster, he will not thereby acquire a seisin as against B, unless B elects to consider himself disseised, but A's possession would constitute a legal seisin against any one who might enter upon him and oust him without right." "According to modern authorities there seems to be no legal difference between the words *seisin* and *possession*, although there is a difference between the words *disseisin* and *dispossession*, the former meaning an estate gained by wrong and injury, whereas the latter may be by right or by wrong, the former denoting an ouster of the disseisee or some act equivalent to it, whereas by the latter no such act is implied." And in the language of the court in *Mississippi*: "Disseisin and ouster mean very much the same thing as adverse possession."³

8. It is accordingly held, that where two persons are in possession at the same time, under different claims of right, he has the seisin in whom is the true title. Both cannot be seised, and the seisin, consequently, follows the title.⁴ If there is a

¹ 4 Kent, Com. 485; *Doe v. Hull*, 2 D. & R. 38.

² *Munroe v. Ward*, 4 Allen, 150; *Burns v. Lynde*, 6 Allen, 312; *Stearns*, Real Act. 216.

³ *Slater v. Rawson*, 6 Met. 439, 444. See *Smith v. Burtis*, 6 Johns. 216, 217; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 410; *Magee v. Magee*, 37 Miss. 151. For a full discussion of *Possession*, as held under the civil law and treated of by Bracton, see *Güterbock's Bracton*, by Cox, pt. 2, ch. xi.

⁴ *Barr v. Gratz*, 4 Wheat. 213; *Smith v. Burtis*, 6 Johns. 218; *Codman v.*

mixed possession, but neither can show a better title, neither can bring trespass against the other.¹ But where there is no adverse holding, the possession follows the property in the land, and is in him who has the title.²

9. There is a seisin in deed and a seisin in law, and the difference between the two is, that in one case an actual possession has been taken, and the other there is a right like that of an heir upon descent from his ancestor, while the possession is vacant, before he has made an actual entry.³ There is also a *constructive* possession without being a possession *in fact*. As where one, under a title deed describing a parcel by metes and bounds, enters upon the premises, claiming to hold the same under his deed, he is constructively in possession of all that is included in his deed, though he actually occupies but a part, nor can he be disseised except by an actual entry and occupancy by another, and only to the extent of such occupancy. Two persons cannot be in adverse, constructive, possession of the same land at the same time.⁴

10. "Disseisin," in the language of Mr. Preston, "is the privation of seisin. It takes the seisin or estate from one man and places it in another. It is an ouster of the rightful [*486] owner *of the seisin. It is the commencement of a new title, producing that change by which the estate is taken from the rightful owner and placed in the wrongdoer. Immediately after a disseisin, the person by whom the disseisin is committed, has the seisin or estate, and the person on whom this injury is committed has merely the right or title of entry." "As soon as a disseisin is committed, the title consists of two divisions; first, the title under the estate or seisin, and secondly, the title under the former ownership."⁵

11. But to constitute an actual disseisin there must not only be an unlawful entry upon lands, or, in technical words, an

Winslow, 10 Mass. 146, 151; 2 Prest. Abst. 286, 290; Kent, Com. 482; Anonymous, 1 Salk. 246; Den v. Hunt, Spenc. 491; Stevens v. Hollister, 18 Verm. 234; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 442; Whittington v. Wright, 9 Ga. 23; Brimmer v. Long Wharf, 5 Pick. 131.

¹ Tappan v. Burnham, 8 Allen, 70; Barnstable v. Thatcher, 3 Met. 239.

² Holley v. Hawley, 39 Verm. 531.

³ Co. Lit. 153; 2 Prest. Abst. 282.

⁴ Hodges v. Eddy, 38 Verm. 344, 345.

⁵ 2 Prest. Abst. 284.

entry not *congeable*, but it must be made with an intention to dispossess the owner, as the act otherwise would be a mere trespass.¹ Where a party claims by a disseisin, ripened into a good title by lapse of time, as against the legal owner, he must show an actual, open, exclusive, adverse possession of the land.² And all these elements are essential to be proved. Strictly speaking, the consent of the legal owner to an act of disseisin, is a contradiction in terms. Disseisin, like trespass, is a tortious act, adverse in its nature, and in derogation of the right of the true owner.³

12. So a seisin once lost by disseisin may be regained by a re-entry by the disseisee upon the land, without turning the person, in the actual seisin, out of possession. But the entry, in such case, to have this effect, must be of such a character and accompanied by such notice as clearly to indicate to the one in possession that his possession is invalid, and his right to the same challenged. A casual entry would not be sufficient.⁴ In other words, the re-entry, in order to regain a seisin, must be done with that intent, and must be made upon some part of the land.⁵ It is enough, however, that the owner goes upon the land with the intent thereby to regain his seisin. No formal declaration need be made upon the land, and a seisin thus gained, authorizes the owner of the land to convey a good title to it, though till this re-entry, he had been disseised.⁶ And if the owner is again denied the occupation by the person in possession, it will be a re-disseisin.⁷ As affecting the question of title, however, these principles are chiefly important in determining whether a title has been gained by adverse enjoyment for the requisite period since the time when the actual seisin was gained by the one and lost by the other.

13. But so important was the effect of seisin deemed at com-

¹ *Smith v. Burtis*, 6 Johns. 218; 4 Kent, Com. 488; *Bradstreet v. Huntington*, 5 Pet. 439; *Ewing v. Burnet*, 11 Pet. 41; 2 *Smith, Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 519, n. 561; *Clarke v. McClure*, 10 Gratt. 305; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 408; *Wiggins v. Holley*, 11 Ind. 2.

² *Snoddy v. Kreutch*, 3 Head. 304; *Gordon v. Sizer*, 39 Miss. 820.

³ *Per Bigelow, J.*, *Cook v. Babcock*, 11 Cush. 209, 210.

⁴ *O'Hara v. Richardson*, 46 Penn. St. 390; *Burrows v. Gallup*, 32 Conn. 499.

⁵ *Peabody v. Hewett*, 52 Me. 46.

⁶ *Brickett v. Spofford*, 14 Gray, 514.

⁷ 2 *Prest. Abst.* 292.

mon law, as evidence of title, that if one died actually seised, his seisin was at once cast upon his heir; and, though the ancestor had acquired it by disseisin, the right of the disseisee to regain the seisin by an entry was lost, and he was driven to prove his title in an action at law for the recovery of his land, whereby alone he could rebut the presumption that the seisin in the heir was lawful;¹ though this effect of a [*487] **"descent cast"* in *"tolling the entry,"* as it was called, is pretty generally, if not universally, abrogated in this country, and was so far changed by the 32 Hen. VIII. ch. 33, that no descent cast would bar a right of entry for regaining seisin by a disseisee, unless the ancestor should have been in possession of the lands in question for the space of five years next after making disseisin thereof.

14. An abandonment by a disseisor of his possession of the estate operates a restoration of the seisin to the true owner,² unless the one who thus abandons is a joint disseisor, in which case the other disseisor becomes sole seised.³

15. Before proceeding to examine more in detail what constitutes such a possession as will avail as conclusive evidence of title, it seems proper to refer, for a moment, to a controversy which was carried on in England for many years, and till a recent period, growing out of an opinion expressed by Lord Mansfield in the case of *Taylor v. Horde*, as to the effect of a feoffment made by a tenant for life or years, upon the right of the lessor. It was the theory of the old common law, that if one in possession of land made a feoffment thereof, it operated upon the seisin, divesting it from him in whom it had been, and vesting it in the feoffee, and, of course, working an actual disseisin of the lessor. Lord Mansfield, on the contrary, held that it did not so operate except at the election of the lessor. The doctrine was controverted by Mr. Preston with no little tartness of spirit, and by Mr. Butler with quite as much ability. But it is now the doctrine of Westminster Hall, and the courts

¹ Co. Lit. 238 a; *Smith v. Burtis*, 6 Johns. 217.

² *Melvin v. Proprietors of Locks and Canals*, 5 Met. 15, 32; *Potts v. Gilbert*, 3 Wash. C. C. 475; *Sawyer v. Kendall*, 10 Cush. 241, 245; *Cleveland v. Jones*, 3 Strobb. 479, n.

³ *Allen v. Holton*, 20 Pick. 458; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 446.

of our own country.¹ Indeed, feoffment with livery of seisin is believed to be practically unknown in this country.

16. But a deed duly executed, delivered, and recorded, will, it is believed, in all the States, actually pass the seisin of the grantor of the estate thereby conveyed, unless himself disseised, without any formal entry, either by force of the express provisions of statutes, or of the doctrine of uses which prevails in most of the States to a greater or less extent, as will be shown hereafter, when treating of titles by deed.² A recorded deed, however, does not *disseise the owner of the [*488] land, unless the grantor occupies some part of the premises.³

17. As the title now under consideration is the result of possession sufficiently long continued, it becomes proper to examine, in the next place, in the light of these general hints upon the doctrine of disseisin, the nature and character of the possession that will serve to establish a valid title.

It is said by Mr. Smith, in his comments upon *Taylor v. Horde*, that "the doctrine of adverse possession, until lately, constituted and perhaps still constitutes one of the least settled, although most important heads of the English law."⁴ The difference between an actual disseisin and one by election was very strongly marked. In case of the former, the owner could no longer convey his lands, since all he had left was a right of entry, which the policy of the law against maintenance would not allow him to part with to another. Therefore, the statute of limitations of 21 Jac. I. ch. 16; applied only to cases where one had been actually put out of his tenancy, and not to those where the owner elected to consider himself disseised.⁵ It became therefore necessary, in order to determine whether the

¹ *Taylor v. Horde*, 1 Burr. 60; 2 Prest. Abst. 279, 390, 401; 4 Kent, Com. 484-489; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 407; Co. Lit. Butler's note, 285; *Miller v. Miller*, Meigs, 493.

² *Wells v. Prince*, 4 Mass. 64, 68; *Barr v. Gratz*, 4 Wheat. 213; *Green v. Liter*, 8 Cranch, 229; 4 Dane, Abr. 85; *Caldwell v. Fulton*, 31 Penn. St. 475; *Matthews v. Ward*, 10 Gill & J. 443; *Higbee v. Rice*, 5 Mass. 344; *Effinger v. Lewis*, 32 Penn. St. 367; *Breckenridge v. Ormsby*, 1 J. J. Marsh. 244. So in New Brunswick. *Wortman v. Ayles*, 1 Hannay, 65; *Wyman v. Brown*, 50 Me. 160.

³ *Putnam School v. Fisher*, 38 Me. 324.

⁴ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 529.

⁵ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 530.

claimant had been out of possession of the estate so as to have left in him only a right of entry, to ascertain in what character the person who was actually in possession held the same, and to that end, the courts looked at his conduct while he had been in possession.¹

18. But before entering upon the examination of what must be the character of a possession in order that it may work a disseisin, and lay the foundation of a title to become complete under the statute of limitations, it should be clearly understood that the estate thereby acquired is, and must be, if anything, a fee. The man who has, and claims the seisin of lands, not subordinate, but adverse to the rights of all other persons, has thereby the fee, of which he can only be divested [*489] by the entry *of a claimant with a better right, or by act of the law, and both of these are barred by his being suffered to hold such seisin for the period prescribed by the statute of limitations.² But whether the estate which two joint disseisors gain by their possession is that of joint-tenants or tenants in common, does not seem to be well settled.³

19. The language upon the subject of the statute of limitations, of the American annotator upon the work of Mr. Smith, is: "The proper and mere operation of the statute of limitations, probably in all the States, is the creation of a positive bar to the assertion and vindication of an admitted and complete title."⁴ "The nature of that adverse possession which is required to constitute a bar to the assertion of a legal title by the owner of it, or by one against whom the adverse occupant brings ejectment," — "must be an *actual, visible, notorious, distinct, and hostile* possession."⁵ Passing over land therefore, lying open and unenclosed in the same manner as others, having occasion to pass there for convenience, though continued

¹ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 530, 531.

² 2 Prest. Abst. 293; Co. Lit. 271 a; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 396; M'Call v. Neely, 3 Watts, 71; Wheeler v. Bates, 1 Fost. 460.

³ Fowler v. Thayer, 4 Cush. 111.

⁴ Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 397.

⁵ Hawk v. Senseman, 6 S. & R. 21, by Duncan, J.; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 560, 561; Calhoun v. Cook, 9 Penn. St. 226; Melvin v. Proprs. Locks and Canals, 5 Met. 15, 33; Turney v. Chamberlain, 15 Ill. 271; Armstrong v. Ristean, 5 Md. 256; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 410-412, 416; 2 Greenl. Ev. § 557; Robinson v. Lake, 14 Iowa, 424.

for twenty years, will not give one a title by adverse possession.¹ "The whole doctrine of adverse possession," say the court of Alabama, "rests upon the presumed acquiescence of the owner." "Acquiescence cannot be presumed, unless the owner has, or may be presumed to have, notice of the possession."² Actual knowledge on the part of the owner must be shown in order to create an adverse possession.³ But the court in *Calhoun v. Cook*, remark, "as to badges of adverse possession, the decisions are not entirely consistent," though that such a possession is necessary to effect a title, seems to be admitted by all. In view of what courts have themselves admitted, the difficulty, if not impracticability, of laying down any precise rule by which, in all cases, the question of adverse possession may be determined, it seems desirable, even at the hazard of repetition, to ascertain what rules courts have recognized in fixing a criterion by which to determine what cases come within the effect of the statute of limitations. In the first place, inasmuch as the title of the true owner may, by the application of this statute, be often divested by the wrongful act of another, the law is stringent in requiring clear proof of the requisite facts. There must be, *first*, an actual occupancy, clear, definite, positive, and notorious;⁴ *second*, it must be continued, adverse, and exclusive, during the whole period prescribed by the statute;⁵ *third*, it must be with an intention to claim title to the land occupied, or, in other words, the fact of possession and the *quo animo* it was commenced and continued, are the only tests.⁶ If, therefore, the intention is wanting of claiming against the true owner, the possession of a tenant will not be adverse, nor, however long continued, bar the owner's right of entry.⁷ If,

¹ *Gittings v. Moale*, 21 Md. 148.

² *Benje v. Creagh*, 21 Ala. 151; *Brown v. Cockerell*, 33 Ala. 47; *Atherton v. Johnson*, 2 N. H. 34; *Cook v. Babcock*, 11 Cush. 210; *Thomas v. Marshfield*, 13 Pick. 250; *School District v. Lynch*, 33 Conn. 330.

³ *Alexander v. Polk*, 39 Miss. 755.

⁴ *Cook v. Babcock*, 11 Cush. 210; *Little v. Downing*, 37 N. H. 367.

⁵ *Doewell v. De La Lanza*, 20 How. 32; *Thomas v. Marshfield*, 13 Pick. 250; *Denham v. Holeman*, 26 Geo. 191.

⁶ *Grant v. Fowler*, 39 N. H. 101; *Jackson v. Wheat*, 18 Johns. 44; *Magee v. Magee*, 37 Miss. 152.

⁷ *Magee v. Magee*, *sup.*; *Cook v. Babcock*, *sup.*; *Jones v. Hockman*, 12 Iowa, 108; *Wright v. Keithler*, 7 Iowa, 92.

therefore, one enter under a bond for a deed, and hold possession prior to the time of payment of the purchase-money, it will not be adverse.¹ So if one enter with a wish or intent to purchase, not knowing who the owner is, but not claiming the premises as his own.² Upon the question of the extent of a party's possession, under which he claims title by disseisin, much may depend upon whether it is done under claim or color of title, by some written instrument, like a deed, levy of execution, decree of court, or the like, in which the parcel in question is described by metes and bounds, or whether the act was simply one of disseisin. In the former case, the extent of claim and constructive possession of the party making the entry and occupying under it, is often referred to the description of the premises in such deed or written instrument. Whereas, in the latter case, the possession reaches no further than there is a *pedis possessio*, an actual occupation by some defined, certain limits, indicated by a substantial enclosure or something of a like notorious character.³ Every element which goes to make a possession adverse, must concur, or it will not confer a title. "And if," in the language of the court of Pennsylvania, "there be one element more distinctly material than another in conferring title, where all requisites are so, it is the existence of a *continuous* adverse possession for twenty-one years." An actual interruption of the possession is fatal to the claim under it.⁴ Where, therefore, the tenant so far yielded to the claim of a third party to a right of possession, as to let him enter and occupy under an agreement to surrender the possession, if he did not by such a time produce the evidence of his right, and failing to do so, he quit possession, and the first tenant re-entered, it was held to break the requisite continuity of his possession to acquire title thereby. He could not *tack* the two periods together, to make, in the aggregate, the requisite period of adverse possession.⁵ The tenant, therefore, must

¹ Ormond v. Martin, 37 Ala. 604.

² Long v. Young, 28 Geo. 130.

³ Hanna v. Renfro, 32 Miss. 129, 130; Little v. Downing, 37 N. H. 355; Barr v. Gratz's Heirs, 4 Wheat. 213; Bell v. Longworth, 6 Ind. 273; Farrar v. Fessenden, 39 N. H. 268, 281; Scales v. Cockrill, 3 Head. 436; Doe v. White, 1 Kerr (N. B.), 627-629; post, *498.

⁴ Groft v. Weakland, 34 Penn. St. 308. ⁵ Austin v. Bailey, 37 Verm. 224.

remain permanently on the land, or else occupy it in such a way as to leave no doubt on the mind of the true owner, not only who the adverse claimant is, but that it is his purpose to keep him out of his land. Nor will it be sufficient, that when, leaving the land, the tenant had a secret purpose and intent to return at his convenience, sooner or later, and reoccupy the land.¹ If, therefore, there is any period during the twenty years, in which the person having the right of entry could not find an occupant on the land, on whom he could bring or sustain his ejectment, technically called "the tenant to the *præcipe*," that period cannot be counted against him, as part of the twenty years.² But this possession need not be continued by the same person. It will be sufficient that it is held by different persons, in succession, holding in privity with each other, or with the one who claims title by such possession.³

20. In analyzing the requisites of such a possession as will give title, it requires, in order to constitute an actual possession, there should be an entry made, so that there may be an ouster effected, and an adverse possession begun, that is, he who would set up such a title must go upon the land with a palpable intent to claim the possession as his own.⁴ Taking a deed is not enough to make an adverse possession; it must be followed by an actual entry, and it is only from the time of such entry being made that the statute of limitations begins to run in favor of him who claims under it.⁵ And a possession may be adverse wherever an ouster may be presumed.⁶ This intent to claim and possess the land is one of the qualities *essen- [*490] tial to constitute a disseisin. A mere going upon the land by any one, and staying there without the intent to claim

¹ Denham v. Holeman, 26 Geo. 191. See Morrison v. Kelly, 22 Ill. 623; Nixon v. Porter, 38 Miss. 415.

² Trotter v. Cassidy, 3 A. K. Marsh. 366.

³ Wheeler v. Moody, 9 Texas, 377; Schrack v. Zubler, 34 Penn. 82 38; Doe-well v. De La Lanza, 20 How. 32; Cooper v. Smith, 9 S. & R. 33. How far husband is held to be in privity with wife in possession of lands, see Doe v. Gregory, 2 A. & E. 14; Doe v. Wing, 6 Car. & P. 538; Doe v. Jauncey, 8 C. & P. 99; Holton v. Whitney, 30 Verm. 405; Johnson v. Nash, 15 Texas, 419; Menkens v. Blumenthal, 27 Mo. 198; Clark v. Chase, 5 Sneed, 636. This may be done by statute in California. Franklin v. Dorland, 28 Cal. 180.

⁴ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 561.

⁵ Robinson v. Lake, 14 Iowa, 424. ⁶ Bradstreet v. Huntington, 5 Pet. 439.

and assert the land to be his own, would not operate as an ouster. The intention guides the entry and fixes its character.¹ Thus, where there was a freehold in the surface-soil and a separate freehold and ownership in the mines beneath, no length of occupation of the surface by the owner thereof, will affect the title to the mines, by the way of constructive disseisin or possession. But, like any other stranger, he may dispossess the mine-owner by digging and carrying away the minerals, and carrying on the processes of mining. But to have that effect, there must be, on his part, an open, continuous, adverse, and notorious possession of the mine.² But where one purchased one hundred acres of land and enclosed and occupied one hundred and thirty, supposing it to be only the one hundred which he had purchased, and supposing it all to belong to him, though he did not originally intend to enclose or take possession of any more than what he had purchased, yet if he continue actually to occupy and improve the whole parcel, it will be considered an adverse occupation, within the statute of limitation, and, after twenty years, will bar the claim of the true owner.³ In the case, however, of *Howard v. Reedy*, the court held, that if, under such circumstances, possession was taken and continued to be held for the period of limitation under a mistake it would not operate as a bar to the claim of the true owner.⁴

21. As to the necessity that the possession should be *continued*, it seems that it must be kept up during the requisite period prescribed by statute, by actual residence or a continued cultivation or inclosure, if the property is susceptible of a permanent, useful improvement; otherwise, such use and occupation of it as, from its nature, it is susceptible of, will be sufficient, if done with a claim of ownership.⁵ Cases illustrative of the several general propositions here contained, will be given hereafter.

¹ *Society, &c. v. Pawlet*, 4 Pet. 507; *Ewing v. Burnet*, 11 Pet. 41; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 401, 413; *La Frombois v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 609, 613, 617; *Ford v. Wilson*, 35 Miss. 504; *Magee v. Magee*, 37 Miss. 138.

² *Armstrong v. Caldwell*, 53 Penn. St. 287.

³ *Crary v. Goodman*, 22 N. Y. 170; *Brimmer v. Long Wharf*, 5 Pick. 131.

⁴ *Howard v. Reedy*, 29 Geo. 152.

⁵ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 562; *Ewing v. Burnet*, 11 Pet. 41; *Brandt v. Ogden*, 1 Johns. 156; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 446.

22. To give a possession the requisite characteristics of being visible, notorious, distinct, and definite in its extent, the ouster, in the first place, must be of such notoriety that the owner may be presumed to have notice of it and of its extent.¹

23. The last requisite or quality of the possession is, that it must be hostile or adverse, which is partly a question of fact and partly one of law. Whether the possession in fact is adverse, or is under the owner's title, is one for the jury, with this limitation, that the burden of showing the possession to have *been adverse is upon the party alleging it. But [*491] what constitutes an adverse possession, and what evidence of its being such is sufficient, are questions of law for the court. As the possession derives its character from the intent with which it was taken and is held, it is competent to show by the declarations of the occupant made during the occupancy, that he did not hold adversely.² Thus, where the line between two adjacent owners is in dispute, and they agree that the fence between them is not the true line, and that that shall be ascertained, an occupancy in reference to such a fence will not be adverse on either side. It is deemed to be by mutual consent. But if a fence is placed upon what is assumed to be the true line, and the parties occupy up to it, it will gain a title, if continued for twenty years, although after that time it is discovered not to be on the proper line.³ But though the occupancy may be explained, so as to do away with the effect otherwise to be ascribed to it, it must be done by the party seeking to disturb the effect of the twenty years possession.⁴ Where, therefore, one enters in subservience to the title of the real owner, there must be a clear, posi-

¹ 2 Smith, *Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 563, 564; *Hodgkinson v. Fletcher*, 3 Doug. 31; *Cook v. Babcock*, 11 Cush. 210; *Doe v. Campbell*, 10 Johns. 477; *Denham v. Holeman*, 26 Geo. 191; *Pray v. Pierce*, 7 Mass. 383; *Doolittle v. Tice*, 41 Barb. 181.

² 2 Smith, *Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 566, 567; *Sailor v. Hertzogg*, 2 Penn. St. 182; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 413. See *Beverly v. McBride*, 9 Ga. 447, that the question of adverse seisin is exclusively for the jury. *Ricard v. Williams*, 7 Wheat. 59, 112, *Church v. Burghardt*, 8 Pick. 327. How far it is a question of law, and how far of fact, see *Bradstreet v. Huntington*, 5 Peters, 438; *Magee v. Magee*, 37 Miss. 154, *Doe v. Harbrough*, 1 N. & Man. 422; *Doe v. Jauncey*, 8 C. & P. 99; *Hale v. Sillo-way*, 1 Allen, 21; *Tappan v. Burnham*, 8 Allen, 70.

³ *Russell v. Maloney*, 39 Verm. 583.

⁴ *Doe v. Lawley*, per *Denman*, C. J., 13 Q. B. 954.

tive, and continued disclaimer and disavowal of the title under which he entered, and an assertion of an adverse right brought home to the owner, in order to lay a foundation for the operation of the statute of limitations.¹ Where the husband entered in the right of his wife, who was tenant for life, and continued to hold the premises after her death for more than twenty years, it was held, that his possession was adverse to the owner after her death, and consequently, operated as a statute bar to his claim.²

24. As the possession of one of several tenants in common, so far as it is exclusive, is always deemed to be subordinate to the rights of his co-tenants and to be held for their benefit, he must, if he seeks to give to it the character of a disseisin, show what is tantamount to an actual ouster of such co-tenants, as, for instance, an appropriation of the profits, under a claim of exclusive right, or with a palpable intent to possess the whole exclusively.³ Merely taking a deed by one of two co-tenants from a stranger of the entire estate, and putting the same on record is not an ouster of his co-tenant, nor a notice of a claim to exclusive and adverse possession. Nor would a deed by one co-tenant of the entire estate to a stranger, be a notice to his co-tenant of an adverse claim of ownership which would work an ouster of his seisin.⁴ A sole pernancy of profits by one co-tenant continued for a long series of years where there has been no claim of right to such exclusive enjoyment, is evidence upon which a jury is to determine whether it was done with the intent to exclude his co-tenant, its effect depending upon such finding.⁵ But for one co-tenant to oust another, he must do such acts as would be an ouster of a landlord by a tenant, or of any one to whom he stood in a fiduciary relation.⁶

¹ *Hall v. Stevens*, 9 Met. 418; *Day v. Cochran*, 24 Miss. 261; *Clarke v. McClure*, 10 Gratt. 305; *Floyd v. Mintsey*, 7 Rich. 181; *Criswell v. Altemus*, 7 Watts, 581; *Long v. Mast*, 11 Penn. St. 189; *Harrison v. Pool*, 16 Ala. 167; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 401.

² *Doe v. Gregory*, 2 Ad. & E. 14.

³ 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 567; *Challefoux v. Ducharme*, 8 Wis. 287; *Zeller's Lessee v. Eckert*, 4 How. 295; *McClung v. Ross*, 5 Wheat. 124; *Alexander v. Kennedy*, 19 Texas, 488; *Bennet v. Bullock*, 35 Penn. St. 364; *Owen v. Morton*, 24 Cal. 376.

⁴ *Holley v. Hawley*, 39 Verm. 531.

⁵ *Lefavour v. Homan*, 3 Allen, 355.

⁶ *Holley v. Hawley*, 39 Verm. 534; *Roberts v. Morgan*, 30 Verm. 319.

25. And the principle is of universal application, that where there has been a privity of title and possession, the occupant, if he seeks to rebut the claim of the other party, by setting up an adverse possession, must show an ouster by some unequivocal act, insisting upon his own right and denying that of the other, and his possession must have been notorious, hostile, and exclusive as against the true owner.¹ And where one party shows documentary evidence of title to land, and another sets up only adverse possession, the burden is on him to show all that is essential to constitute such a title.²

26. These principles would probably, so far as their soundness is concerned, be rarely questioned. It has, therefore been *deemed sufficient to refer for their support [*492] to the positions laid down by the authors quoted. But in order to illustrate the application of these doctrines, it is proper to refer also to a few, from the multitude of cases which have arisen in the English and American courts upon the subject of disseisin, adverse possession, and title acquired under the operation of the statutes of limitation. The courts of Massachusetts had occasion to consider this subject in *Parker v. Proprietors, &c.*, in which the doctrine is thus stated: "If a person enters on land having no right or title, and maintains exclusive possession, taking the rents and profits, his possession would be considered adverse, and, if of sufficient notoriety, would amount to a disseisin. But if a person enter, having a title and right of entry, his entry and possession are presumed to be in conformity to his title."³ "To constitute disseisin, it is not necessary, at the present day, to prove the forcible expulsion of the owner, nor is it necessary, to prove an actual ouster of the co-tenant." "The intention so to hold the estate, must be manifest," and the open and notorious possession of the person who, in that case, claimed as purchaser, was held to be constructive notice of a claim adverse to the co-tenant of his grantor, the rightful owner. "This adverse entry and possession, claiming the whole es

¹ *Long v. Mast*, 11 Penn. St. 189.

² *Kowland v. Updike*, 4 Dutch. 101.

³ See *Means v. Welles*, 12 Met. 356; *Den v. Sharp*, 4 Wash. C. C. 609; *Tappan v. Tappan*, 11 Fost. 41.

tate, constitutes a disseisin."¹ And the court, in various forms, repeat the doctrine that actual force is not necessary, and that possession, notorious and adverse, is equivalent to an actual expulsion. It has, accordingly, been held, that if one enter under a void grant or a sale by parol, it is a disseisin of the true owner.² And a continued possession for twenty years, under claim of right, under such a deed or sale, ripens into a right of possession, which defeats the owner's right of entry, and gives an absolute title against every one not excepted by statute.³

[*493] *27. If a seisin, moreover, is admitted as proved to be in any one, at any given time, the law presumes it to continue till negatived by evidence, by him who alleges a disseisin.⁴

28. In the case of successive holders of land after a disseisin committed by the first of them, the seisin thereby acquired by him will not enure to the benefit of the others who come into possession after him, unless there is a privity of estate between them and him by purchase or descent.

Their consecutive possessions cannot, in the language of the law, be tacked together to make a continuity of disseisin. And this applies in the case of the wife of a disseisor holding after his decease, as, unless she claims as his devisee, she does not come in with the requisite privity, such as exists between ancestor and heir, grantor and grantee, or devisor and devisee.⁵

¹ *Parker v. Proprs. Locks and Canals*, 3 Met. 99, 102; *Ricard v. Williams*, 7 Wheat. 60; *Bradstreet v. Huntington*, 5 Pet. 445; *Barr v. Gratz*, 4 Wheat. 213; *Manchester v. Doddridge*, 3 Ind. 360; *Prescott v. Nevers*, 4 Mason, 330; *Clapp v. Bromaghan*, 9 Cow. 530; *Fishar v. Prosser*, Cowp. 217; *Owen v. Morton*, 24 Cal. 376.

² *Melvin v. Proprs. Locks & Canals*, 5 Met. 15, 33; *Comins v. Comins*, 21 Conn. 413.

³ *Jackson v. Newton*, 18 Johns. 355; 2 Crabb, Real Prop. 1006; *Blair v. Smith*, 16 Mo. 273; *Sumner v. Stevens*, 6 Met. 337; *Ashley v. Ashley*, 4 Gray, 197.

⁴ *Brown v. King*, 5 Met. 173; *Brimmer v. Proprs. Long Wharf*, 5 Pick. 135; *Fogate v. Herkimer Co.* 9 Barb. 287; *Currier v. Gale*, 9 Allen, 525.

⁵ *Sawyer v. Kendall*, 10 Cush. 241, 244; *Armstrong v. Ristean*, 5 Md. 256; *Melvin v. Proprs. Locks and Canals*, 5 Met. 15, 32; *Wade v. Lindsey*, 6 Met. 407, 412; 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 265; *Overfield v. Christie*, 7 Serg. & R. 173; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 447; *Alexander v. Pendleton*, 8 Cranch, 462; *Chilton v. Wilson*, 9 Hamph. 399; *Doe v. Brown*, 4 Ind. 143; *Johnson v. Nash*, 15 Texas, 419, 422; *Jackson v. Leonard*, 9 Cow. 653; *Doe v. Campbell*, 10 Johns. 477; *Doe v. Barnard*,

And the same doctrine was applied to acquiring an easement of way by user, by several successive owners of the dominant estate.¹ In a subsequent case the court extended the doctrine of successive owners taking their consecutive possessions to gain a title by limitation, to a purchaser who held under the executor of an insolvent who was the first disseisor, and had devised the estate to one who held it for a time until sold for the payment of testator's debts. The purchaser held directly from the disseisor, and his devisee gained no rights as against his creditors.² And in another case it was held sufficient to continue the original disseisin and possession, that the second occupant came in under the first, and continued to hold, although there was no deed from the first to the second, creating a privity of estate between them. It would be sufficient if done under a contract by which the second was to have possession.³ In Tennessee, it is not necessary to show even a parol agreement between successive occupants. It is enough that the owner has been kept out of possession the requisite period of time, if there has been a continuous possession by successive occupants, and the same is the law in North Carolina.⁴ So where a husband entered, in right of his wife, upon land to which she had no title but by possession, and, after her death, continued to hold possession of the premises for a period long enough, if added to that during which he had held it during his wife's life, to make the requisite term of limitation, it was held, that he could not tack these together, so as thereby to acquire a title.⁵ But where a husband entered upon land claiming it as belonging to his wife, and after his death, she continued to occupy till the two periods amounted to the term of limitation, it was held to be a sufficient adverse possession to gain for her a title thereby.⁶ So where a married woman, under a contract of purchase, entered upon and occupied land uninterruptedly, and exclusively, for more than twenty

13 Q. B. 945; *Ward v. Bartholomew*, 6 Pick. 415; *Schrack v. Zubler*, 34 Penn. St. 38; *Cochrane v. Ferris*, 18 Texas, 850; *Marr v. Gilliam*, 1 Cold. (Tenn.) 488.

¹ *Leonard v. Leonard*, 7 Allen, 277.

² *Peele v. Chever*, 8 Allen, 89.

³ *Smith v. Chapin*, 31 Conn. 530.

⁴ *Scales v. Cockrill*, 3 Head, 435; *Candler v. Lunsford*, 4 Dev. & Bat. Law, 409.

⁵ *Doe v. Wing*, 6 C. & P. 538. See *Doe v. Jauncey*, 8 C. & P. 99.

⁶ *Holton v. Whitney*, 30 Verm. 405.

years, it was held, that she thereby acquired a title to the same, and, in an action by the heirs of the original owner against the husband to recover the land, it was held, that he might defend against the same under the title of his wife, although he had, during her occupancy, but without her knowledge, made a deed of release of the premises to the original owner, the latter never having availed himself of such release.¹ But, in some of the States, the right of the purchaser under a disseisor to tack his grantor's possession to his own, is denied.²

29. The prevailing doctrine in the United States seems to be, that one who is in possession of lands, may convey them by deed, such possession giving him, for the purpose of conveyance, a sufficient seisin, which will consequently carry with it a covenant of warranty such as the grantor may enter into in the deed of conveyance, and this may be availed of by the assignee of the grantee to whom the land may be conveyed, even though the possession by such grantor was not sufficient to work an actual disseisin of the real owner of the estate.³ So one in possession may have a writ of entry against one who disturbs him in this possession, although the demandant could not himself defend against a third party in whom was the freehold.⁴ So if one enter upon woodland and spot a line of trees around it, claiming it as his own, it will give him a good title to the land against all persons but the real owner, and if a stranger enter upon it, the one thus in possession may have trespass against him, although, as against the owner, such possession would not work a disseisin.⁵

30. It may be remarked, in passing, that no disseisin of the tenant of a particular estate and occupation under it, however long continued, will affect the right of the reversioner. The latter may enter whenever the particular estate shall [*494] determine *by its limitation.⁶ The statute does not

¹ *Steel v. Johnson*, 4 Allen, 425.

² 2 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 563; *King v. Smith*, Rice, 10.

³ *Slater v. Rawson*, 6 Met. 439. See *Overfield v. Christie*, 7 Serg. & R. 173.

⁴ *Currier v. Gale*, 9 Allen, 525; *Hubbard v. Little*, 9 Cash. 475.

⁵ *Woods v. Banks*, 14 N. H. 112; *Hicks v. Coleman*, 25 Cal. 131-137; *Hodges v. Eddy*, 38 Verm. 345.

⁶ *Miller v. Ewing*, 6 Cush. 34; *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 4 Johns. 390; *Salmons v. Davis*, 29 Mo. 176; *Doe v. White*, 1 Kerr, N. B. 627.

run against a reversioner till the death of the tenant for life, where the latter has conveyed the estate in fee.¹ And where a husband and wife were disseised, and the disseisor held adverse possession for the period of limitation, which possession would bar the right of the husband, if living, at his death, she or her representatives might claim the land.² But this does not apply to the case of a disseisin done to a mortgagor, as to its affecting the mortgagee.³

31. Under the rule requiring open, visible, and exclusive possession to constitute an actual disseisin of the owner, it was held, that causing the land to be run around by a surveyor, and trees marked on the lines, and occasionally cutting grass upon a part of it, was not enough to accomplish this.⁴ Nor would an entry under a deed of wild land from one who has no title, though it were formally executed and recorded, have this effect, unless followed by a visible occupancy or exclusive possession, manifested by fences or otherwise.⁵ So entering upon land adjoining that of another, occasionally, and making sugar in a camp built thereon, and this continued for more than twenty years, is not such a possession as the statute contemplates.⁶ And an enclosure of land, to be sufficient to answer this purpose, must be a substantial enclosure, and with an actual occupancy, definite, positive, and notorious. Nor would the making of what is called a "lop" or "slash" fence around a parcel of woodland, answer this purpose, unless actual notice to the owner is proved.⁷ Where, therefore, one claimed a parcel of woodland by disseisin against another, in whom was the record title, and, to establish his claim, showed that he entered and cut for use and sale the wood and timber growing upon it,

¹ *Gernet v. Lynn*, 31 Penn. St. 94; *Melvin v. Locks & Canals*, 16 Pick. 137; s. c. 17 Pick. 255; *Raymond v. Holden*, 2 Cush. 269; *Pinkney v. Burrage*, 30 N. J. Law. 21.

² *Gregg v. Tesson*, 1 Black, 150, 154; ante, vol. 1, pp. *142, *143.

³ *Poignard v. Smith*, 8 Pick. 272.

⁴ *Kennebec Purchase v. Springer*, 4 Mass. 416; *Smith v. Burtis*, 6 Johns. 218; *Slice v. Derrick*, 2 Rich. 627; *O'Hara v. Richardson*, 46 Penn. St. 391.

⁵ *Bates v. Norcross*, 14 Pick. 224; *Lane v. Gould*, 10 Barb. 254.

⁶ *Smith v. Mitchel*, 1 A. K. Marsh. 207.

⁷ *Coburn v. Hollis*, 3 Met. 125; *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 2 Johns. 230; *Den v. Hunt, Spenc.* 487; *Hale v. Glidden*, 10 N. H. 397; *Smith v. Hosmer*, 7 N. H. 436; *Hutton v. Schumaker*, 21 Cal. 453; *Borel v. Rollins*, 30 Cal. 415-417.

at one time cutting it all off; that he moreover cleared a small part for cultivation, and ran a line between this and the other party's other land, *lopping* trees along the line to mark it; all of which was known to the other party; but that the land in question was never enclosed by fences, nor built upon, nor cultivated, it was held, that all this did not constitute an actual seisin, as these were not, in their nature, acts of exclusive possession.¹

32. And yet it is not, as a universal proposition, necessary to prove an actual residence or an actual enclosure. The erection of a fence, for instance, is nothing more than an [*495] act presumptive *of an intention to assert an ownership and possession over the property. Other acts may be equally evincive of such an intention;² and there need not be a fence, building, or other improvement made to constitute an adverse possession. Where acts of ownership have been done upon land which, from their nature, indicate a notorious claim of property in it, within the knowledge of an adverse claimant, and without interruption or an adverse entry by him, it will be sufficient. Thus, where the owner of a parcel of wild land sold a certain number of acres to be taken from one side of the lot, and the parties went on and fixed the line of division, but made no fence, and each occupied up to that line for twenty years, it was held to give the purchaser a good title by possession, although it was afterwards found that the line was fixed too far distant from the side line of the lot.³ And neither actual occupation, cultivation, nor residence are necessary, when the property is so situated as not to admit of any permanent, useful improvement, and the continued claim of the party has been evidenced by public acts of ownership such as he would exercise over property which he claimed in his own right, and would not exercise over property which he did not claim.⁴ Thus it is said, "much depends upon the na-

¹ *Slater v. Jepherson*, 6 Cush. 129; *Stevens v. Hollister*, 18 Verm. 294; *Parker v. Parker*, 1 Allen, 245; *Stevens v. Taft*, 11 Gray, 35.

² *Ellicott v. Pearl*, 10 Pet. 412; *Langworthy v. Myers*, 4 Iowa, 18.

³ *Faught v. Holway*, 50 Me. 24.

⁴ *Ewing v. Burnet*, 11 Pet. 41. See *Blood v. Wood*, 1 Met. 528, 535; *Den v. Hunt*, Spenc. 487; *Bailey v. Carleton*, 12 N. H. 9; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 415, 416; *La Frombois v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 604; *Royall v. Lisle*, 15 Ga. 545.

ture and situation of the property, and the uses to which it can be applied, or to which the owner or claimant may choose to apply it." "To constitute an adverse possession, it is only necessary that it should have been under a claim or color of title." "The possession will be adverse if had and continued under the claim or color of title, however groundless the supposed title may prove to be."¹

33. But there are some acts which are of such a notorious character as of themselves to constitute a disseisin, without any necessity of showing that they were known to the real owner of the land, such as building a fence around the land, or erecting buildings upon it.² And one by maintaining a fence within a highway under a claim of right, for forty years, will gain for the occupant a prescriptive right against the Commonwealth.³ If one tenant in common erect a building upon the common land for his own use, it is an ouster to that extent of his cotenants, and they may have trespass against him for so doing, or may remove the buildings.⁴

34. If the disseisin be merely by the erection of buildings, it would not, it seems, extend beyond the part of the land actually occupied by them, as where one built a blacksmith's and carpenter's shop upon another's land, and the occupants of the latter shop occasionally made use of the adjoining land to dry boards upon, and those of the blacksmith shop used other parts of the lot to run carriages on, and put tires on wheels, it was held, that the disseisin extended only to the part covered by the buildings,⁵ and so far as it was a disseisin, it operated against the mortgagee, though done to the possession of the mortgagor.

35. It may be stated, as a generally conceded principle, that *acts of disseisors are, in respect to the law- [*496] ful owners or true proprietors, to be limited to an

¹ *Ford v. Wilson*, 35 Miss. 504, 505; *Grant v. Fowler*, 39 N. H. 104; *Farrar v. Fessenden*, 39 N. H. 281; post, *498.

² *Poignard v. Smith*, 6 Pick. 172, 178; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 416, 423; *Jackson v. Warford*, 7 Wend. 62.

³ *Cutter v. Cambridge*, 6 Allen, 20.

⁴ *Bennett v. Clemence*, 6 Allen, 18; *Stedman v. Smith*, 8 E. & Bl. 1; *Erwin v. Olmsted*, 7 Cow. 229.

⁵ *Poignard v. Smith*, 8 Pick. 272.

actual ouster and exclusive occupation by such disseisors, and as many cases say, to what one has under actual improvement and within a substantial enclosure.¹

36. Although the doctrine above laid down would not, probably, be controverted in any case where the entry of the party claiming adversely to the true owner is not made under the color of title by deed, there are numerous cases where it has been held, that if one enters under such deed or written instrument, and occupies and improves the land, the limits and extent of his legal possession will be defined by the boundaries contained in such deed or instrument, though such deed be itself of no validity in conveying a title. The cases cited below will be found to favor both these propositions.² And if the possession be vacant, it is probably true that a grantee entering under a deed which is recorded, and occupying a part of the premises described therein, may be deemed to have gained a seisin of all that is embraced within its boundaries. But, in the case of wild lands, the seisin follows the title, except so far as one, entering without title, shall have actually occupied by enclosures or by cultivation of an open and notorious character, and thereby divested the real owner of the possession.³ And while *it

¹ *Brimmer v. Proprs. Long Wharf*, 5 Pick. 131, 135; *Blood v. Wood*, 1 Met. 528, 535; *Miller v. Shaw*, 7 Serg. & R. 129; *Cresap v. Hutson*, 9 Gill, 269; *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 2 Johns. 234; *Davidson v. Beatty*, 3 Harr. & M'H. 594; *Brandt v. Ogden*, 1 Johns. 156; *Den v. Hunt*, Spenc. 487; *Lane v. Gould*, 10 Barb. 254; *Sharp v. Brandow*, 15 Wend. 597; *Jackson v. Warford*, 7 Wend. 62; *Smith v. Hosmer*, 7 N. H. 436; *Watrous v. Southworth*, 5 Copin. 305; *Cluggage v. Duncan*, 1 Serg. & R. 113; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 429; *Pipher v. Lodge*, 16 Serg. & R. 231; *Hatch v. Vermont Central Railroad*, 28 Verm. 142; *Goewey v. Urig*, 18 Ill. 238; *Hanna v. Renfro*, 32 Miss. 129, 130.

² 2 *Smith, Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 563; *Hoag v. Wallace*, 8 Fost. 547; *Swift v. Gage*, 26 Verm. 224; *Hoye v. Swan*, 5 Md. 537; *Royall v. Lisle*, 15 Ga. 545; *Turney v. Chamberlain*, 15 Ill. 271; *Green v. Liler*, 8 Cranch, 250; *Ellicott v. Pearl*, 10 Pet. 412; *Spaulding v. Warren*, 25 Verm. 316; *Barr v. Gratz*, 4 Wheat. 213; *Kennebeck Purchase v. Springer*, 4 Mass. 416; *Blood v. Wood*, 1 Met. 528, 535; *Lane v. Gould*, 10 Barb. 254; *Noyes v. Dyer*, 25 Me. 468; *Little v. Downing*, 37 N. H. 367; *Farrar v. Fessenden*, 39 N. H. 279; *Sanborn v. French*, 2 Foster, 249; *Jackson v. Newton*, 18 Johns. 355; *Brackett, Petitioner*, 53 Me. 228.

³ *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 2 Johns. 230; *Bailey v. Carleton*, 12 N. H. 9; *Sharp v. Brandow*, 15 Wend. 599; *Little v. Megquier*, 2 Me. 176; *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 400, 426; *Jackson v. Howe*, 14 Johns. 405; *Cluggage v. Duncan*, 1 Serg. & R. 113; *Criswell v. Altemus*, 7 Watts, 426; *Sicard v. Davis*, 6 Pet. 124; *Den v. Hunt*,

is laid down as a principle of universal application, that the law never raises a constructive possession against the real owner of land,¹ merely flowing land for working a mill, does not disseise the owner, nor gain a title to the land flowed beyond a mere easement in it.² It is also held to be a sound proposition, that if an entry be wrongful, though it be under a deed, a possession thereby gained will only extend so far as the tenant shall actually occupy the premises.³ But where a man entered, under a claim of title, upon another's tract of land, and improved and fenced a part of it, and had the boundaries of his claim surveyed and marked, including woodland not enclosed, and openly and exclusively used the woodland as his own, in connection with his improvements, as farmers ordinarily use their woodlands, it was held to be an actual occupation of such woodland rebutting the constructive seisin and possession of the one who originally held the title.⁴ But if the owner also, during this time, went upon this wild land, and did acts of ownership thereon which he had a right to do, it would negative the essential requisite of the possession, that of being exclusive on the part of him who claimed to have gained title by it.⁵ And it is universally true, that actual possession of a part is legal possession of all the land covered by the party's title.⁶ The doctrine is ably discussed by Parker, C. J., in *Bailey v. Carleton*, where a sound distinction seems to be maintained. If a purchaser enter upon land described in a deed, and do such acts of ownership upon it as would raise a reasonable presumption that the owner, knowing them, must have understood that there was a claim of title, the deed or color of title under which

Spenc. 487; *Morrison v. Hays*, 19 Ga. 294; *Doe v. White*, 1 Kerr. N. B. 632, 641.

¹ *Miller v. Shaw*, 6 Serg. & R. 140; Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 433; *Jackson v. Woodruff*, 1 Cow. 286; *Slice v. Derrick*, 2 Rich. 627; *Steedman v. Hilliard*, 3 Rich. 101.

² *Bartholomew v. Edwards*, 1 Houst. 17.

³ *Den v. Hunt*, Spenc. 487.

⁴ *Wolf v. Ament*, 1 Grant, Cas. 150; *Ament v. Wolf*, 33 Penn. St. 331; *Murphy v. Springer*, 1 Grant, Cas. 73.

⁵ *O'Hara v. Richardson*, 46 Penn. St. 390, 391; *Royer v. Benlow*, 10 S. & R. 303.

⁶ *Eifert v. Read*, 1 Nott & M'C. 364; *Anderson v. Darby*, Id. 369; *Gardner v. Gooch*, 48 Me. 492; *Hardisty v. Glenn*, 32 Ill. 64; *Fairman v. Beal*, 14 Ill. 244.

he has entered serves to define specifically the boundaries of the claim or possession. But if the occupation is not of a character to indicate a claim which may be coextensive with the limits of the deed, then the principle, that the party is presumed to enter adversely according to his title, has no sound application, and the adverse possession may be limited to the actual occupation. Accordingly it was held, that where a grantor embraced land to which he had no title, in the same deed with that to which he had a title, and his grantee entered [*498] upon and occupied that *part only to which the grantor had a title, it did not operate as a disseisin of the owner of the other land described in the deed, although such deed was duly recorded. No presumption of a claim and of a color of title beyond the actual occupation, could arise as to other lots, so as to give it the character of a disseisin or possession adverse to the true owner, so as to bind him, although such grantee might be held to be in possession according to his title, in a controversy with one who should make a subsequent entry without right.¹ In the case of *Little v. Megquier*, the claimant entered under a void deed which was regularly recorded, describing the land, and caused the boundaries of the same to be run out according to the deed, and paid the taxes thereon for many years. The land was wild and uncultivated. But it was held, that these acts did not work a disseisin of the true owner, for to do that, the grantee must have entered upon the land, and continued openly to occupy and improve it.

36 *a.* The importance which the law attaches to the circumstance that one making a disseisin of another's estate, enters under what is called *color of title*, in determining the extent and limits of such disseisin, seems to justify, if it do not require, a somewhat more extended reference to cases where this doctrine has been applied. The term "color of title," means a deed or survey of the land placed upon the record of land titles,

¹ *Bailey v. Carleton*, 12 N. H. 9. See also *Jackson v. Richards*, 6 Cow. 617; *Sharp v. Brandow*, 15 Wend. 599; *Little v. Megquier*, 2 Me. 176; *Cluggage v. Duncan*, 1 Serg. & R. 111, 119; *Jackson v. Woodruff*, 1 Cow. 286; *Smith v. Ingram*, 7 Ired. 175; *Williams v. Miller*, Id. 186; *Waggoner v. Hastings*, 5 Penn. St. 300. See *Seigle v. Louderbaugh*, 5 Penn. St. 490; *Chandler v. Spear*, 22 Verma. 588; *Osborne v. Ballew*, 12 Ired. 373; *Berryman v. Kelly*, 13 Ired. 269; *White v. Burnley*, 20 How. 235.

whereby notice is given to the true owner, and all the world, that the occupant claims the title.¹ The effect of having color of title, is sometimes to extend, by construction, a possession beyond the actual occupation, and sometimes to change the character of casual acts of entry upon land from acts of mere trespass to those of possession.² But actual occupation is equally effectual, whether with or without color of title, so far as it extends.³ And no one can claim color of title by deed, when entering upon land beyond what his deed purports to convey.⁴ As to what constitutes a color of title, any instrument having a grantor and a grantee, and containing a description of the lands intended to be conveyed, and apt words for their conveyance, gives color of title to the lands described.⁵ The color must arise out of some conveyance purporting to convey title to a particular tract of land.⁶ And a possession, under color of title, is with a claim of right by virtue of the colorable title.⁷ The color of title suffices only to give boundary to the possession.⁸ But a release or quitclaim of all one's interest in certain land, by deed, raises no color of title unless it appears that the releasor had some title to, or possession of the premises.⁹ Among the instances where a deed, not in itself effectual in passing a good title, has given color of title to one who has entered under it, are those of tax deeds.¹⁰

So a quitclaim deed from one claiming under a tax deed, though insufficient to pass a good title, gives to one in possession under it, color of title.¹¹ So the deed of a married woman gives to the grantee named, a color of title, and extends his possession to the limits described in it.¹² And a void deed may raise a color of title, defining the extent and boundary of the possession under it, by the description in the deed.¹³ Thus,

¹ *Hodges v. Eddy*, 38 Verm. 345.

² *Jakeway v. Barrett*, 38 Verm. 323.

³ *Hodges v. Eddy*, *sup.*

⁴ *Woods v. Banks*, 14 N. H. 111.

⁵ *Brooks v. Bruyn*, 35 Ill. 394.

⁶ *Shackleford v. Bailey*, 35 Ill. 391.

⁷ *Russell v. Erwin*, 38 Ala. 48.

⁸ *Minot v. Brooks*, 16 N. H. 376.

⁹ *Woods v. Banks*, *sup.*

¹⁰ *Dillingham v. Brown*, 38 Ala. 311; *Prescott v. Nevers*, 4 Mason, 326; *Little v. Megquier*, 2 Me. 176; *Brackett, Petitioner*, 53 Me. 236.

¹¹ *Minot v. Brooks*, *sup.*

¹² *Sanborn v. French*, 2 Foster, 246; *Brackett, Petitioner*, *sup.*

¹³ *Wofford v. McKinna*, 23 Tex. 46; *Charles v. Saffold*, 13 Tex. 94; *Pillow v. Roberts*, 13 How. 472.

where J. S., while occupying an estate of great extent, but with no other title except an exclusive possession, granted it by deed, with metes and bounds, which was recorded, to J. D., who entered upon the premises, claiming them as his own, it was held to give him such a possession as, under the statute, might ripen into a title, and might be availed of against a stranger entering upon the premises, although he never had enclosed the same by a fence. And this doctrine applies as well to extensive, as limited tracts or parcels of land.¹ And the foregoing doctrine extends to carrying the flats in front of and adjoining to upland, which has thus been conveyed and described, where possession of the upland has been taken under the deed.² But where the void deed purported to convey two distinct parcels, and the grantee entered upon only one, and occupied it, it was held not to affect the other parcel described in his deed.³

37. In a case where the owners of adjacent lands, in their deeds, bounded respectively on each other, but no measure or monument was given, it was held, that the possession and title followed the prior occupancy, where this had been continued for twenty years or more. And where one erected a house so that the eaves extended over the disputed line, it was submitted to the jury which was first, the occupancy of the other party up to the line claimed, or the erection of the house with its extended eaves. If the latter, then the subsequent occupation of the former by cultivating, &c. up to the body of the house, was no disseisin of the owner to the extent of his eaves. If the former, the erection of the eaves did not disseise the occupant of the land, though it might give the owner of the house an easement in the other land to that extent.⁴ *

* NOTE. — By the French law, by custom or agreement, applicable to most houses, a right exists in the owner to use space enough, adjoining the same, to place a ladder for purposes of repairing the same, though it be upon the land

¹ *Hicks v. Coleman*, 25 Cal. 131 - 137; *Moss v. Scott*, 2 Dana, 275; *Jackson v. Elston*, 12 Johns. 454; *Thomas v. Harrow*, 4 Bibb, 563; *Kennebec Purchase v. Laboree*, 2 Me. 275; *Kimball v. Lohmas*, 31 Cal. 154; *French v. Rollins*, 21 Me. 372; *Welborn v. Anderson*, 37 Miss. 162, 163.

² *Brackett, Petitioner*, 53 Me. 231, 244.

³ *Grimes v. Ragland*, 28 Geo. 123.

⁴ *Thacker v. Gardener*, 7 Met. 484; *Carbrey v. Willis*, 7 Allen, 370; *Millett v. Fowle*, 8 Cush. 150.

*38. The policy of the law in giving the title to the [*499] one who shall have had such an adverse possession of lands as has been above described, is thus stated by Gibson, C. J., in *Sailor v. Hertzogg*: "The statute protects the occupant, not for his merit, for he has none, but for the demerit of his antagonist in delaying the contest beyond the period assigned for it, when papers may be lost, facts forgotten, or witnesses dead."¹

39. But wherever the acts of supposed disseisin is equivocal in its nature, the presumption always is, that it is in accordance with, and not in hostility to, the title of the true owner.² Such possession is never conclusive, it only raises a presumption of fact, and not a presumption of law. It is only evidence of a grant, subject to be controlled like other presumptions of fact.³

40. And mere possession, without a claim of right, gives no title, however long the same may be continued.⁴

41. It is, moreover, a principle of universal application, that the statute of limitations, in respect to the possession of lands, does not run against a State,⁵ at common law, for a State cannot be disseised except as provided by statute.

42. To give effect to an adverse possession as a source of the adjacent owner. This space is generally of a defined width, and extends upon each side of such house, if it be a separate structure, and is called "*Tour de l'Echelle*." It is regarded as a servitude which the land owes to the building. But if the owner of the building suffers the water from the roof to fall upon this space, he is, as it seems, bound to keep the same paved, so that the water shall not penetrate his neighbor's soil. *Merlin, Répertoire de Jurisp. "Tour de l'Echelle,"* § 3; 1 *Lois des Bâtimens, &c. par Lepage*, 244, 252. (Ed. 1857.)

¹ *Sailor v. Hertzogg*, 2 Penn. St. 182. See *Ang. Lim.*, 2d ed. 412, 413. See *La Frombois v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 616, by *Viele*, Sen.

² *Pipher v. Lodge*, 16 Serg. & R. 229, 231; *Smith v. Hosmer*, 7 N. H. 436; *Smith v. Bartis*, 6 Johns. 218; *Jackson v. Sharp*, 9 Johns. 163; *Foggate v. Herkimer Co.* 9 Barb. 287; *Pierson v. Turner*, 2 Ind. 123; *Alexander v. Polk*, 39 Miss. 755.

³ *Stevens v. Taft*, 11 Gray, 36.

⁴ *La Frombois v. Jackson*, 8 Cow. 603; *Adams v. Guice*, 30 Miss. 397.

⁵ *Lindsey v. Miller*, 6 Pet. 666; *The People v. Van Rensselaer*, 8 Barb. 189; *The People v. Clarke*, 10 Barb. 120; *Kingman v. Sparrow*, 12 Barb. 201; *Doe v. Durden*, 20 Ga. 467; *Ward v. Bartholomew*, 6 Pick. 409; *Burgess v. Gray*, 16 How. 48, 65; *Vickery v. Benson*, 26 Ga. 590.

title, not only must the possession be such as raises a presumption of a deed, but it must be yielded to without opposition by the real owner.¹ When, therefore, such owner protested against the acts of possession of the other party, and consulted counsel in regard to them, it prevented the party who did the acts from thereby gaining a title.²

43. Though the cases chiefly referred to thus far, have been those where there was something tantamount to an actual ouster or expulsion of the original owner, followed by a possession of the requisite character, it is not necessary that the possession should have been originally acquired by such an [*500] act, *if it is taken and retained under a claim of ownership on the part of the tenant, and this is known and yielded to by the original owner. Such possession is deemed to be adverse, though not in its character hostile. Thus, where two adjacent owners of land agreed upon a fence of convenience between their lands, varying from the true line, and each occupied up to it for more than twenty years, without claiming to own beyond the true line, their original rights were held not to be affected. Whereas, if each had, in such case, occupied up to the fence, and claimed a right so to do, by reason of such holding, it would, after twenty years, have given a title in accordance with such occupancy.³ But where the wall between the parties was three feet in thickness, and stood wholly upon one of the owner's land, and both parties occupied up to it, and the one on whose land it did not stand claimed to own to the middle of it, but this was not known to the other party, and no change in occupancy took place, it was held that this claim had no effect in changing the rights of the respective owners to the land occupied by the wall. There was no adverse occupation on the part of the claimant.⁴ So if the possession indicated by a

¹ *Stevens v. Taft*, 11 Gray, 35, 36.

² *Stillman v. White Rock Co.* 3 Woodb. & M. 538, 549. But it ought to be stated that the decision in this case related to an incorporeal hereditament, and not the title to the soil and freehold.

³ *Burrell v. Burrell*, 11 Mass. 294. See *Smith v. Hosmer*, 7 N. H. 436; *Fisher v. Prosser*, Cowp. 218; *Bradstreet v. Huntington*, 5 Peters, 439, 440; *Duke v. Harper*, 6 Yerg. 285; *Doe v. Bird*, 11 East, 49.

⁴ *Huntington v. Whaley*, 29 Con. 391.

fence originate and is continued in a mistake, or misapprehension as to the true line, commencing when it was erected, it is not deemed to be adverse.¹ The law upon this subject is thus stated by the court of Alabama: "If a party occupy up to a certain fence because he believes it to be the line, but having no intention to claim up to the fence if it should be beyond the line, an indispensable element of adverse possession is wanting. The *intent* to claim which is set up, is upon the condition that the fence is upon the line, or if the fence is put over the line from mere convenience, the occupation and exercise of ownership are without claim of title, and the possession would not be adverse." But it is stated that if the parties agree upon and build a *dividing fence* between their parcels, and they respectively occupy up to that, it would be an adverse possession. The effect of the occupancy, therefore, would depend upon the intention of the parties while enjoying it. And cases in other States, recognize the same doctrine, that an occupation, for the period of limitation by adjacent owners, up to an agreed division line between their lands, would bar their right to deny that it was the true line.²

44. Thus, if one purchases and pays a consideration for land, and enters and occupies it the requisite period of time, it will give him a title, under the principle that his possession is adverse;³ so if he enters and occupies under a deed which proves to be invalid, or his title proves to be otherwise defective.⁴ But if he enters under an agreement to purchase, — until the consideration is paid, he will be considered as holding subordinate to the title of the true owner.⁵ So a holding by one who

¹ Howard v. Reedy, 29 Geo. 154.

² Brown v. Cockerell, 33 Ala. 45; Holton v. Whitney, 30 Vt. 410; St. Louis University v. M'Cune, 28 Mo. 481.

³ Brown v. King, 5 Met. 173.

⁴ Ang. Lim., 2d ed. 435, 436; La Frombois v. Jackson, 8 Cow. 589, 596, 597, 602, 613; Hall v. Stevens, 9 Met. 418, 422; Barker v. Salmon, 2 Met. 32; Jackson v. Wheat, 18 Johns. 40; Blight v. Rochester, 7 Wheat. 535; Stansbury v. Taggart, 3 McLean, 457.

⁵ Brown v. King, 5 Met. 173; Knox v. Hook, 12 Masa. 329; McClannahan v. Barrow, 27 Miss. 664; Stamper v. Griffin, 12 Ga. 450; Den v. Kip, 2 Dutch. 351; Stansbury v. Taggart, 3 McLean, 457. See Ripley v. Yale, 18 Verm. 220; Fosgate v. Herkimer Co. 12 Barb. 352; Vrooman v. Shepherd, 14 Barb. 441; Doe v. Edgar, 2 Scott, 732; Ormond v. Martin, 37 Ala. 604.

enters under a parol gift of land, would be sufficient to give him an effectual title against the donor.¹

45. So where the co-tenants made a parol partition of lands, and each occupied in severalty the share assigned to him, it was held, that such possession was so far adverse as to create a title to the same in severalty.² And, upon the same principle, if one of several co-tenants takes exclusive possession of a portion of the common estate, and holds it for a sufficient length of time, it will be presumed in law that the parties have made partition.³

46. And where a *cestui que trust*, who was entitled [*501] to the *possession of the estate by the nature of the trust, was suffered to occupy the premises for a long space of time, it was held, that the law would either presume a conveyance of the legal estate to him from the trustee, or that he had held by adverse possession.⁴ So though, as a general proposition, a *cestui que trust* in possession of land, is tenant at will of the trustee, and a sub-letting by a tenant at will, does not determine the tenancy without notice to the lessor, yet where the *cestui que trust* entered into an agreement with one C., a stranger, by which the latter took possession of and occupied the premises, until, by sufferance of C., one L. entered and occupied them for the term of more than twenty years, paying no rent therefore, and, at that time, the *cestui que trust* died, it was held, that by such possession of L., the entry of the trustee was barred, the same having been adverse, and not as a tenant at will.⁵

46 a. Although a trustee may disavow and disclaim his trust, and thereby drive the claimant to an action within the period of limitation, no length of time bars a direct trust between the trustee and *cestui que trust*, without an express disavowal of the trust by the trustee.⁶ The rule is a settled one,

¹ Sumner v. Stevens, 6 Met. 337; Pope v. Henry, 24 Verm. 560. See Comins v. Comins, 21 Conn. 413; Greene v. Munson, 9 Verm. 40. See also Cole v. Roe, 39 Mo. 413, that such a holding would not be adverse.

² Gregg v. Blackmore, 10 Watts, 192; Jackson v. Moore, 13 Johns. 513.

³ Russell v. Marks, 3 Met. (Ky.) 45.

⁴ Kinsman v. Loomis, 11 Ohio, 475; Jackson v. Moore, 13 Johns. 516; Newmarket v. Smart, 13 Am. L. Reg. 390-404, and note by Judge Redfield.

⁵ Melling v. Leak, 16 C. B. 652, 670.

⁶ Ante, p. *184.

that so long as the trust subsists, the right of a *cestui que trust* cannot be barred by his being out of possession. This can only be done by barring and excluding the estate of the trustee.¹ There can be no disseisin of a trust.² But a *cestui que trust* may dispossess his trustee, and gain the legal estate, though his possession will be presumed to be permissive and not adverse to his trustee.³ And a stranger, by an adverse possession as against a trustee, continued for the requisite period of time, may bar both the legal estate of the trustee, and the equitable interest of the *cestui que trust*.⁴

47. It seems to be the law, as now understood, that if one enters under a contract to purchase, and hold undisturbed possession for twenty years, claiming to hold as owner, it is sufficient to raise a presumption of a grant from the original owner.⁵

48. In summing up the effect of an adverse possession, continued for such a length of time as to operate as a statute bar to the claims of others to establish a title to lands, the language of the court in *School District, &c. v. Benson*, may be adopted. "A legal title is equally valid, when once acquired; whether it be by a disseisin or by deed, it vests the fee-simple, although the modes of proof, when adduced to establish it, may differ." "An open, notorious, and adverse possession for twenty years, would operate to convey a complete title as much as any written conveyance. And such title is not only an interest in the land, but it is one of the highest character, the absolute dominion over it, and the appropriate mode of conveying it is by deed." ⁶ The operation of the statute takes away the title of the real owner, and transfers it, not in form, indeed, but in legal effect, to the adverse occupant. In other words, the statute of limitation gives a perfect title. The doctrine is stated thus strongly, because it seems to be the result of modern de-

¹ *Zeller's Lessee v. Eckert*, 4 How. 295; *Découche v. Savetier*, 3 Johns. Ch. 216; *Cholmondeley v. Clinton*, 2 Meriv. 361; *Overstreet v. Bate*, 1 J. J. Marsh. 370.

² *Dow v. Jewell*, 18 N. H. 358.

³ *Whiting v. Whiting*, 4 Gray, 241; *Cholmondeley v. Clinton*, *sup.*

⁴ *Goss v. Singleton*, 2 Head (Tenn.), 67, 76.

⁵ *Maltonner v. Dimmick*, 4 Barb. 566; *Ashley v. Ashley*, 4 Gray, 200.

⁶ *School District v. Benson*, 31 Me. 384, 385.

cisions, although it was once held that the effect of the statute was merely to take away the remedy, and did not bind the estate, or transfer the title. In *Moore v. Luce*, cited below, the court say explicitly, "it is a mistake to suppose the person barred by the statute loses nothing but his remedy," and the cases cited below sustain the same general doctrine.¹ The court of Vermont have held that adverse possession for the statutory period gives the possessor an absolute, indefeasible title to the land against the whole world, on which he could either sue or defend as against the former owner. As a natural consequence, the former owner is divested of all the new owner acquires. This gives to adverse possession the effect of a conveyance. And an agreement made after the lapse of the statutory period to waive the benefit of the statute, is not effective, but the title remains in the party who has acquired it under the statute, until he conveys it back with all the solemnities required in any deed of land. If, therefore, one be in possession of land, he may have trespass against another for entering upon it, although he have a clear, paper title, if he has, in the mean time, lost his title by adverse possession of a third party. It would be like the entry of a stranger.²

49. The cases cited in illustration of the principles which have been applied in determining the questions that have arisen under this branch of the subject, though numerous, are but a sample of the almost infinite variety which may be found in the books since the times of 21 Jac. I., when the English statute of limitations was enacted, which was in force there until that of 3 & 4 Wm. IV, ch. 27, was substituted in its stead. It has not been thought worth while to copy either of these statutes, as they are easily accessible to the reader, since the several States have each its own local laws upon the subject, which will be found, it is believed, in an intelligible, though summary form, in the accompanying note. In most, if not all statutes of limitation, both of England and this coun-

¹ *Steel v. Johnson*, 4 Allen, 426; *Schall v. Williams Valley Railroad*, 35 Penn. St. 191, 205; *Ford v. Wilson*, 35 Miss. 504; *Ellis v. Murray*, 28 Miss. 129; *Graffius v. Tottenham*, 1 W. & Serg. 494; *Grant v. Fowler*, 39 N. H. 103; *Pederick v. Searle*, 5 S. & R. 240; *Moore v. Luce*, 29 Penn. St. 262; *Armstrong v. Ristean's Lessee*, 5 Md. 256; *Blair v. Smith*, 16 Mo. 273.

² *Hughes v. Graves*, 39 Verm. 365. See *Phillips v. Kent*, 3 Zab. 155.

try, there are saving clauses in respect to persons under disabilities, such as coverture in women, infancy, lunacy, and the like. But with few or no exceptions, a disability, to have that effect, must exist at the time when the adverse possession and consequent right of action to recover the land by the true owner, begins or accrues. The saving does not extend to any disability subsequently arising.¹ If, therefore, possession is taken while the owner is a *feme covert*, an infant, or insane, the statute does not begin to run so long as the disability continues.² And where possession was taken during the life of a tenant for life, and the reversioner, then a *feme sole*, married during the life of such tenant, her disability of coverture existing at his death prevented the statute from running against her, so long as she remained a *feme covert*.³ But where the tenant, claiming by adverse possession, entered in the lifetime of the ancestor, who was under no disability, and continued to hold after his death, till the expiration of the twenty years, during a part of which time the heir was under disability, which existed at the time of the descent of the estate, it was held, that he was thereby barred.⁴ So where the disseisin took place in 1834, and the disseisee became insane in 1843, and continued so the remainder of the twenty years, he was held to be barred.⁵ And where the demandant, who was a *feme sole* when the tenant took possession, soon after married, and remained a *feme covert* during the twenty years, her right was barred by the statute.⁶ In Georgia, however, if a disability occurs on the part of the owner during the term of limitation, it sus-

¹ *Marcus's Lessees v. Selden*, 1 How. 37; *Seawell v. Bunch*, 6 Jones (Law.), 197; *Clark's Ex'rs v. Trail*, 1 Met. (Ky.) 40, 41; *Haynes v. Jones*, 2 Head (Tenn.), 372; *Cotterell v. Dutton*, 4 Taunt. 820, 830; *Tracy v. Atherton*, 36 Verm. 503, 510; *McFarland v. Stone*, 17 Verm. 174; *Reimer v. Stuber*, 20 Penn. St. 458.

² *Gage v. Smith*, 27 Conn. 74; *Seawell v. Bunch*, *sup.*; *Little v. Downing*, 37 N. H. 355; *Edson v. Munsell*, 10 Allen, 557.

³ *McLane v. Moore*, 6 Jones (Law), 520.

⁴ *Becker v. Van Valkenburgh*, 29 Barb. 324; *Fleming v. Griswold*, 3 Hill, 85. See *Lincoln v. Purcell*, 2 Head (Tenn.), 143. See, as to the effect upon prescription as to easements, &c. of descent of the servient estate to a minor heir before the requisite period of adverse enjoyment, ante, p. *50.

⁵ *Allis v. Moore*, 2 Allen, 306.

⁶ *Currier v. Gale*, 3 Allen, 328; *Thorp v. Raymond*, 16 How. 247. See also *Ang. Lim.*, 4th ed. § 477 - 480.

pends the operation of the statute while the disability continues.¹

[*502]

*NOTE.

In *Alabama*, actions for the recovery of lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or the possession thereof, must be commenced within ten years after the cause of action accrues. Such action may be brought by the State within twenty years. When a right of entry on land accrues, the entry must be considered as having been made, and the cause of action as having accrued. If the person entitled to bring such action, or make an entry on land or defence founded on the title to real property, be, at the time such right accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, a married woman, or insane, or imprisoned on a criminal charge for any term less than for life, the suit may be brought, or the entry or defence made, within three years after the termination of such disability. But the period of limitation can in no case be extended beyond twenty years from the time the cause of action or right accrued. Upon an arrest or reversal of a judgment for the plaintiff, a new action may be commenced within a year, though the period limited may have expired. Code, 1867, §§ 2899, 2900, 2909, 2910.

In *Arkansas*, when any person or persons, their heirs or assigns, have had three years' possession of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, claiming the same by virtue of a deed, devise, grant, or assurance, they are entitled to keep and hold in possession such quantity of land as is specified and described in their deed of conveyance, devise, grant, or other assurance; and such possession constitutes an effectual bar to any action brought for the recovery thereof in law or equity, and vests an absolute and indefeasible title in fee-simple to such lands and tenements, unless the person entitled to such action is at the time of the possession taken, or after the accruing of the right of title, within the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, or *non compos mentis*, in which case he may bring his action within two years after the removal of the disability. Cumulative disabilities are not allowed, but only those which existed at the time when the right first accrued. Suits for the recovery of lands must be within seven years after the cause of action accrued; but if the person entitled to such action is under any of the disabilities before mentioned, at the time the right first accrued, he may bring the same within three years next after the removal of the disability. No cumulative disability is allowed. No entry upon lands is valid as a claim, unless an action is commenced thereon within one year after such entry, and within seven years from the time when the right accrued. Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 106, §§ 1, 2, 3, p. 748.

¹ *Everett v. Whitfield*, 27 Ga. 159. See, as to incorporeal hereditaments in similar cases, *Washburn, Easements*, 110, 114; ante, p. *50.

In *Connecticut*, entry into land is limited to fifteen years next after the right first accrued; and no entry is sufficient, unless an action is commenced thereupon and prosecuted with effect, within one year next after the making thereof; provided, that if the person who has such right is, at the time of its first accruing, within the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, *non compos mentis*, or imprisoned, he or his heirs may bring an action, or make an entry, within five years after the removal of the disability, or, in case of the death of such *person entitled to the action, within five years [*508] after the death. Upon the reversal of a judgment rendered for the plaintiff, a new action may be brought within one year. Conn. Gen. Stat. 1866, p. 551.

In *Delaware*, the right of entry into any land is barred after twenty years after the right first accrued, and no action for or in respect to any real property can be maintained unless the plaintiff, his ancestor, or predecessor, has had actual seisin, or possession of the premises within such time. But if the person entitled to the action or entry is, at the time the right first accrues, an infant, or a married woman, insane, or imprisoned, the action may be brought within ten years after such disability is removed; and if such person die under any of these disabilities, any person claiming under him has the benefit of this saving. Del. Code, 1852, ch. 122, p. 439.

In *Florida*, real actions must be brought within twenty years next after the cause of action accrued, and an entry must be within the same period. If the person entitled to the action or entry is under the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, *non compos mentis*, imprisoned, or not within the State at the time such right or title accrued, he or his heirs may bring such action, or make the entry within ten years next after such disabilities are removed. In all writs of right and other actions possessory, any person may maintain a writ of right upon the possession or seisin of his ancestor or predecessor within fifty years; or any other possessory action upon the possession or seisin of his ancestor or predecessor within forty years next before the *teste* of the writ; but no person can maintain a real action upon his own possession or seisin, but within thirty years next before the *teste* of the writ. Thomps. Dig. 1847, p. 441.

In *Georgia*, actions of ejectment must be brought within seven years after the cause of action accrues; and an entry upon any real estate must be made within this period after the right or title accrued. But if the person entitled to such action or entry is, at the time such right accrued, within the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, *non compos mentis*, imprisoned, or beyond the State, he or his heirs may bring such action or make such entry within three years after the removal of such disability. Twenty years' uninterrupted possession of any real estate by a person claiming under any conveyance or other authority, either by himself, or by others under whom he claims, gives a good title to the same in fee-simple. A suit is the only evidence of a claim to land. Cobb, New Dig. 1851, p. 559.

In *Illinois*, the right of entry is limited to twenty years next after the right accrued; and every real, possessory, ancestral, or mixed action, or writ

of right, must be brought within such period. When any person is possessed of any real property by actual residence thereon, having a connected title in law or equity, deducible of record from the State or the United States, or from any officer authorized to sell such land for the non-payment of taxes, or on execution, or under any order, judgment, or decree of any court of record, such action must be brought within seven years next after possession being taken; but when the possessor acquires such title after taking such possession, the limitation begins to run from the time of his acquiring title. Such possession, *to be a bar, must be continued for seven years next preceding the time of asserting the right of entry, or the commencement of the action. The heirs, devisees, and assigns of the person having such possession and title, have the benefit of his possession. A provision like this, respecting the right of action within seven years, applies also to the right of entry. Every person in the actual possession of lands or tenements, under claim and color of title, made in good faith, for seven successive years, paying all taxes assessed thereon, is adjudged the legal owner; and all persons claiming under such possession before such seven years have expired, who continue and complete the same in like manner, have the benefit of this provision. One having color of title, made in good faith, to vacant and unoccupied land, and paying the taxes assessed thereon for seven successive years, is adjudged the legal owner of the same; and others holding under him have the benefit of his possession. But such tax-payer is not entitled to the benefit of this provision, if any person, having a better paper title to such vacant and unoccupied land, pays the taxes on it for any one or more years of said term of seven years. These provisions respecting possession under claim or color of title, do not extend to lands or tenements owned by the United States or the State of Illinois, nor to school and seminary lands, nor to lands held for the use of religious societies, nor to lands held for any public purpose. Nor do they extend to lands or tenements when there is an adverse title to them, and the holder of such adverse title is under the age of twenty-one years, insane, imprisoned, *feme covert*, out of the United States, and in the employment of the United States or the State of Illinois; provided such person commence an action for the recovery of such lands or tenements within three years after the removal of such disabilities, or, in case of vacant and unoccupied land, shall, within such time, pay all the taxes with interest thereon, at the rate of twelve per cent. *per annum*, that have been paid on such land, to the person or persons who have paid the same. Upon the reversal or arrest of any judgment for the plaintiff, or upon his being nonsuited, a new action may be brought within one year thereafter. In all cases where the person entitled to the entry or action is, at the time, under the age of twenty-one years, insane, or *feme covert*, he may make such entry or bring such action within the various times limited after the removal of such disability. 2 Ill. Comp. Stat. 1858, 751, 752.

In *Indiana*, actions for the recovery of the possession of real estate must be brought within twenty years. Any person being under legal disabilities

when the cause of action accrues, may bring his action within two years after the disability is removed. If the person entitled to bring the action die before the expiration of the time limited, his representatives may bring the same within eighteen months after the death of such person. If the plaintiff fail in the action from any cause except negligence in the prosecution, or the action abate or is defeated by the death of a party, or judgment be arrested or reversed, a new action may be brought within five years after such determination. 2 Ind. Rev. Stat. 76, 77.

In *Iowa*, actions for the recovery of any real property must be brought *within ten years after the right accrues. But minors may [*505] commence such action within one year after attaining their majority. If the person entitled to the action die within one year next previous to the expiration of the limitation, this does not apply until one year after such death. If the plaintiff fail for any cause, except negligence, in the prosecution of his action, a new one may be brought within six months thereafter. *Iowa*, Code, 1851, ch. 99, §§ 1659, 1666, 1667, 1668; Revision, 1860, §§ 2740-2750.

In *Kentucky*, an action for the recovery of real property can only be brought within fifteen years after the right first accrued to the plaintiff, or to the person through whom he claims. If, at the time the action accrued, such person was an infant, married woman, or of unsound mind, such person, or the person claiming under him, may bring the action within three years after the removal of such disability, or death of the person under disability, — cumulative disabilities are not allowed. The period within which the action may be brought, cannot in any case, by reason of any death, or the existence or continuance of any disability, be extended beyond thirty years from the time the right first accrued. Where an occupant of land, or the person under whom he claims, has a connected title thereto in law or equity, deducible of record from the Commonwealth, and has had an actual occupancy of the same by settlement thereon for seven years, such possession is a bar to any right of entry or action under an adverse title. But this limitation does not apply to a person who is an infant, a married woman, of unsound mind, or out of the United States, in the employment of the United States or of the State, until after seven years after the removal of such disability; but the disability of one of several claimants saves only his own right, and not that of another. 2 Ky. Rev. Stat., Stant. ed. 1860, 123-125, ch. 63, arts. 1, 2.

In *Louisiana*, thirty years' possession prescribes land, though possessed without any title, or knavishly. If possessed fairly and honestly, and by *just title*, that is, by one by virtue of which property may be transferred, such as a *sale* or *donation*, though no real right may be thereby given, ten years' possession will be sufficient if the true proprietor resides in the State, and *twenty years* in case he resides abroad. There is another prescription of four years, which was against a minor upon his coming of age, as to any real estate alienated by the tutor in cases not provided by law. For the prescription arising from the ten or twenty years' possession, there must be good faith, and apparently good title; if, therefore, the title be defective with

respect to *form*, there can be no basis for the ten or twenty years' prescription. Also, any interruption, either natural or legal, suspends prescription. Husbands and wives cannot prescribe against one another. Minors and persons under interdiction, cannot be prescribed against. Married women may be prescribed against, though not separated as to property, for all belonging to them and administered by their husbands, saving their recourse against their husbands. But prescription does not take place during marriage, as it respects property alienated which made a part of the dowry, nor in any case during marriage when the action of the wife may be prejudicial to [*506] her husband. Lands not acquirable by alienation, *cannot be obtained by prescription. Creditors, and every other person who may have any interest in acquiring an estate by prescription, have a right to plead it even in case the person claiming such an estate should renounce the said right of prescription. Abstract from the Civil Code of Louisiana; 4 Griffith's Annual Law Register, p. 686.

In the Revised Statutes of Louisiana for 1856, an amendment to the code provides, that absentees and non-residents of the State shall stand on the same footing in relation to the laws of prescription, as persons present or residents of the State. La. Rev. Stat. 1856, p. 82, § 29.

In *Maryland*, whenever land is taken up under a common or special warrant, or warrant of re-survey, escheat, or proclamation warrant, any person, body politic or corporate, may give in evidence under the general issue, his possession thereof; and if it appears in evidence that the person, body politic or corporate, or those under whom they claim, have held the lands in possession for twenty years before the action brought, such possession is a bar to all right or claim derived from the State under any patent issued upon such warrant. Md. Code, 1860, vol 1, art. 57, § 9, p. 397.

In *Massachusetts*, no person can commence an action for the recovery of lands, or make an entry thereon, unless within twenty years after the right of action or of entry first accrued, or after he or those under whom he claims, have been seised or possessed of the premises. But if such right or title first accrued to an ancestor or predecessor of the person who brings the action or makes the entry, or to any other person under whom he claims, the twenty years are computed from the time when the right or title so first accrued. The right of entry or of action of a person disseised, is deemed to have accrued at the time of such disseisin. If he claims as heir or devisee of one who died seised, his right is deemed to have accrued at the time of such death, unless there is an intervening estate, in which case his right is deemed to accrue when such estate expires, or would have expired by its own limitation. His right, so far as it is affected by any limitation prescribed in any remainder or reversion, is deemed to accrue when the intermediate or precedent estate would have expired by its own limitation, notwithstanding any forfeiture thereof for which he might have entered at an earlier time; he may enter, however, when entitled to do so by reason of any forfeiture or breach of condition, and if he claims under such a title, his right is deemed to have accrued when the forfeiture was incurred or the

condition was broken. In all cases not otherwise specially provided for, the right is deemed to have accrued when the claimant, or the person under whom he claims, first became entitled to the possession of the premises under the title upon which the entry or the action is founded. If any minister or other sole corporation is disseised, any of his successors may enter upon the premises, or bring an action for the recovery thereof, at any time within five years after the death, resignation, or removal of the person so disseised, notwithstanding the twenty years after such disseisin have expired. If, at the time when such right first accrues, the person entitled to it is within the age of twenty-one years, disabled by marriage, insane, *im- [*507] prisoned, or absent from the United States, such person, or any one claiming under him, may make the entry or bring the action at any time within ten years after such disability is removed, though the twenty years before limited have expired. And if such person dies under these disabilities, the entry may be made or the action brought by his heirs, or any other person claiming under him, at any time within ten years after his death, notwithstanding said twenty years have expired. But in such case no further time is allowed on account of the disability of any other than the first person who was under disability, and died without having recovered the premises. A person is not deemed to have been in possession, unless he has continued in open and peaceable possession of the premises for one year next after such entry, or unless an action is commenced upon such entry and seisin within one year after he is ousted or dispossessed. When the right of entry or action of a tenant in tail or remainder-man, is barred by limitation, the estate tail and all remainders and reversions expectant thereon are also barred. When a tenant in tail or remainder-man dies before the expiration of the period of limitation, no person claiming any estate which the tenant in tail or remainder-man might have barred, can make an entry or bring an action to recover such land, except within the period during which the tenant in tail or remainder-man, if he had so long lived, might have made such entry or brought such action. Suits for the recovery of lands in behalf of the Commonwealth, must be brought within twenty years, except as to the Province lands in the town of Provincetown, and land owned by the State in the basin of the Back Bay. A notice given to prevent the acquisition of an easement, is deemed so far a disturbance of the right in question, as to enable the party claiming it to bring an action of tort as for a nuisance or disturbance, for the purpose of trying the right. On the abatement of the action by the death of any party thereto, or on reversal or arrest of judgment, a new action for the same cause may be brought at any time within one year after the determination of the original action, or after the reversal of the judgment. Mass. Gen. Stat. 1860, ch. 154, p. 774.

In *Maine*, the statute of limitations of real actions was originally derived from that of *Massachusetts*, and the general provision of the statutes of these States are identical, namely, those limiting the time of bringing the action or making the entry, those defining the time when the right accrues, the saving provisions in favor of those under legal disabilities, those relating to ac-

tions brought by a minister or other sole corporations, and to actions brought by the State. It is further provided in Maine, that to constitute such adverse possession as to bar the right of recovery, it shall not be necessary for the lands to be surrounded with fences, or rendered inaccessible by water; but it is sufficient, if the possession, occupation, and improvement are open, notorious, and comporting with the ordinary management of a farm, although the part used as a wood-lot is not enclosed. When a writ in such action fails from insufficient service or negligence of the officer, or the action is defeated for any matter of form, or by death or other disability, or the demandant's judgment is reversed, a new action may be brought within six [*508] months. No action for the recovery of *lands can be commenced or maintained against any person in possession thereof, when he or those under whom he claims have been in actual possession for more than forty years, claiming to hold by adverse, open, and exclusive possession in their own right. Me. Rev. Stat. 1847, ch. 105, p. 616.

In *Michigan*, the statute is the same as that in *Massachusetts*, except that there is no provision specially relating to tenants in tail and remainder-men, or the acquisition of easements. Mich. Comp. Laws, 1857, ch. 164.

By act 1863, No. 227, it is provided, that actions for the recovery of lands, or the possession thereof, shall be brought within fifteen years after the right of action or of entry shall have first accrued to the plaintiff, or to some person through whom he claims; except that where the defendant claims title to the land by deed made upon a sale thereof by an executor, administrator, or guardian, or by a sheriff under process of court, it shall be within five years; and within ten years where the defendant claims title under a deed made by some officer of the State or of the United States, upon the sale of land for taxes. These periods of limitation are computed from the time when the right or title first accrued to the plaintiff or to his ancestor, predecessor, grantor, or other person from whom he claims. The person establishing the legal title to the premises is presumed to have been possessed thereof, within the time limited for bringing the action, unless it appear that the same have been possessed adversely to such legal title, by the defendant, or by those from whom he claims. If the person entitled to entry be a minor, a married woman, insane, or imprisoned, or absent from the United States, unless within one of the British provinces of North America, he may make such entry, or bring such action, at any time within five years after such disability is removed. Upon the death of such person under disability, the entry may be made or the action brought by his heirs or any one claiming under him at any time within five years after his death. Laws, 1863, p. 388.

In *Minnesota*, actions for the recovery of real property, or for the recovery of the possession thereof, cannot be maintained unless the plaintiff, his ancestor, predecessor, or grantor, was seised or possessed of the premises within twenty years before the commencement of the suit. If the person entitled to the action be, at the time it accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, insane, or imprisoned on a criminal charge, or in execution under sentence as a criminal, for a time less than his natural life, or a married woman, the time

of such disability is not a part of the time limited, except that the period cannot be extended more than five years by any disability, except infancy, nor longer than one year after the disability ceases. If the person entitled to the action die before the expiration of the time limited, his representatives may commence an action within one year; and when judgment for the plaintiff is arrested or reversed, he may commence anew within one year. Minn. Comp. Stat. 1858, ch. 60, §§ 4, 17, 18, 25.

In *Oregon*, the statute is like that of *Minnesota*, except that the time, while the party entitled to the action is under the legal disabilities mentioned, is not to be a part of the time limited in any case. *Oreg. Stat.* 1855, p. 192, *et seq.*

In *Mississippi*, no person may make an entry or commence an action to recover any land, but within ten years after the time at which the right to make such entry, or to bring such action, shall have first accrued to him or to some person through whom he claims. But if at such time the person entitled to make the entry or bring the action was under any of the disabilities of infancy, coverture, imprisonment, idiocy, lunacy, unsoundness of mind, or absence beyond the limits of the United States, on business of the State or the United States, such person, or any one claiming under him, may, notwithstanding the period of ten years shall have expired, make an entry or bring an action at any time within ten years after the removal of such disability or the death of such person under the disability. After the death of such person under disability, no further time beyond ten years is allowed for the disability of any other person. The same provisions apply to suits in equity to recover land, except that, in the case of a concealed fraud, the right of action is deemed to have accrued at the time when the fraud shall, or with reasonable diligence might have been first known or discovered. *Miss. Rev. Code*, 1857, p. 398, ch. 57, §§ 1, 2.

In *Missouri*, actions for the recovery of lands, or for the recovery of the possession thereof, cannot be commenced or maintained, unless the plaintiff, his ancestor, predecessor, grantor, or other person under whom he claims, was seised or possessed of the premises within ten years before the commencement of such action. No entry is deemed valid as a claim unless an action is commenced *within one year after the making such entry, [*509] and within ten years from the time the right accrued. If the person entitled to the action be, at the time his right accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, insane, or imprisoned on any criminal charge, or in execution upon some conviction of a criminal offence for any time less than life, or a married woman, he may bring his action within three years after such disability is removed, provided that no action shall be commenced or entry made, by any person under such disabilities, after twenty-four years after the cause of the action or right of entry accrued. The possession of part of a tract or lot of land in the name of the whole, and with the usual acts of ownership over the whole, is deemed a possession of the whole. If any person die under the disabilities specified, his heirs, or any person claiming under him, may bring the action within three years after his death. 2 *Mo. Gen. Stat.* 1866, ch. 191, § 1.

In *Nebraska*, actions to recover lands must be brought in twenty-one years after the cause of action accrues, unless the claimant is married, imprisoned, insane, or a minor, in which cases, in ten years after the removal of such disability. Rev. Stat. 1866, p. 395

In *Nevada*, five years is the limitation for actions for entry. Laws, 1867.

In *New Hampshire*, actions for the recovery of any real estate must be brought within twenty years after the right first accrued to the plaintiff, or to any person under whom he claims. If the person first entitled to maintain an action for the recovery of such estate, was within the age of twenty-one years, a married woman, or insane at the time such right accrued, such action may be commenced within five years after such disability is removed. N. H. Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 202, §§ 1, 2.

In *New Jersey*, the right of entry into any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or of action for the same, is barred after twenty years from the time when the right of entry or cause of action first accrued; provided, that the time, during which the person having such right or title shall have been under the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, or insane, shall not be taken or computed as part of the said limited period. Upon a reversal or arrest of judgment given for the plaintiff, he or his representatives may commence a new action for the same within one year from such time. Nixon, Dig. N. J. Laws, 1855, p. 436.

In *New York*, no action for the recovery of any real property, or for the recovery of the possession thereof, can be maintained unless the plaintiff, his ancestor, predecessor, or grantor, was seised or possessed of the premises within twenty years before the commencement of such action; and no action or defence to an action founded upon the title to real property, or to rents or services out of the same, is effectual, unless the party prosecuting the action or making the defence was in such manner possessed of the premises within twenty years. No entry is deemed valid as a claim unless an action be commenced thereupon within one year after the making of such entry, and within twenty years from the time when the right accrued. The person establishing a legal title to the premises is presumed to have been possessed of them within the time required by law, and the occupation of another person is deemed to have been under such legal title, unless the premises appear to have been held adversely for twenty years before the commencement of such action. When the occupation is under claim of title founded upon a written instrument, as being a conveyance, or upon the decree or judgment of a competent court, and is continued *for twenty years, it is deemed to have been adverse, except that the possession of one lot is not deemed a possession of any other lot of the same tract. Land claimed in such manner is deemed to have been adversely possessed,— 1. Where it has been usually cultivated or improved; 2. Where it has been protected by a substantial enclosure; 3. Where, although not enclosed, it has been used for the supply of fuel, or of fencing timber for the purposes of husbandry, or the ordinary use of the occupant; 4. Where a known farm or a single lot has been partly improved, the portion of such farm or lot that may have been left

not cleared or not enclosed, according to the usual course and custom of the adjoining country, shall be deemed to have been occupied for the same length of time as the part improved and cultivated. Where there has been an actual continued occupation, not founded upon a written instrument, judgment, or decree, the premises so actually occupied are deemed to have been held adversely; and in such case land is deemed to be held adversely, — 1. Where it has been protected by a substantial enclosure; 2. Where it has been usually cultivated or improved. The possession of a tenant is deemed the possession of the landlord until the expiration of twenty years from the termination of the tenancy, or from the last payment of rent where there was no written lease. If the person entitled to commence the action or make the entry or defence be, at the time his right first accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, insane, or imprisoned on a criminal charge, or in execution upon conviction of a criminal offence for a term less than life, or a married woman, the action may be commenced, or the entry or defence made, within ten years after the disability shall cease, or after the death of the person entitled who shall die under such disability. The State cannot sue for any real property unless the right or title of the people shall have accrued within forty years, or unless the people or those from whom they claim shall have received the rents and profits within such time. 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat. 4th ed. pp. 494–496; and 5th ed. vol. 3, pp. 502–504.

In *Wisconsin*, the statute of limitations respecting real property is the same as that of New York, from which it was copied, except that a continued occupation under a claim founded on a written instrument or judgment for ten years is deemed adverse, and constitutes a bar; and the possession of a tenant is deemed the possession of the landlord until the expiration of ten years only from the termination of the tenancy, or from the last payment of rent where there is no written lease. Nor is there any limitation of actions by the State. Wis. Rev. Stat. 1858, ch. 138, §§ 1–13, p. 819.

In *California*, the statute was also copied from that of New York, and is the same, except that the term of limitation is five years, with a provision, that an action may be maintained by a party claiming real estate, or the possession thereof, under title derived from the Spanish or Mexican governments, or the authorities thereof; if such action be commenced within five years from the time of the final confirmation of such title by the government of the United States, or its legally constituted authorities; and the time of limitation of actions in respect to real property by the State, is ten years. Wood, Dig. Cal. Laws, 1858, pp. 45–47.

*In *North Carolina*, no person can enter or make a claim to any [*511] real property but within seven years next after his right first accrues; provided, if at such time the person entitled to any entry or claim of lands, was within the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, *non compos mentis*, imprisoned, or beyond the seas, such person may make an entry or commence an action within three years next after the removal of such disability of infancy, coverture, unsoundness of mind, or imprisonment; or persons beyond the seas, within eight years after the title of claim becomes due. If a judg-

ment or verdict for the plaintiff is reversed or arrested, he may commence a new action at any time within a year thereafter. The possession of any real property for twenty-one years, under color of title, and under known and visible lines or boundaries, is a bar to the State. N. C. Rev. Code, 1854, p. 871, ch. 65, §§ 1, 2.

In *Ohio*, an action for the recovery of the title, or possession of lands, tenements, or hereditaments, can only be brought within twenty-one years after the cause of such action shall have accrued. But if a person, entitled to such action, be, at the time this right or title first accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, a married woman, insane, or imprisoned, he may bring such action within ten years after such disability is removed. If the action be commenced in due time, and a judgment for the plaintiff be reversed, or if he fail otherwise than upon the merits, and the time limited shall have expired, the plaintiff, or, if he die and the cause of action survive, his representatives may commence a new action within one year after such reversal or failure. Ohio, Rev. Stat. 1854, ch. 87, §§ 9, 10, 22, p. 626; Rev. Stat. 1860, ch. 87, §§ 9, 10, 23.

In *Kansas*, the provisions are the same as those in Ohio. Kans. Laws, 1859, ch. 25, §§ 16, 17, 30; Gen. Laws, 1862, p. 126, §§ 16, 17-30.

In *Pennsylvania*, the right of entry into any real estate is barred after the expiration of twenty-one years after the right first accrued, and the right of action to recover lands is barred by the same period. But if any person or persons, having such right or title, are within the age of twenty-one years, *feme covert*, *non compos mentis*, or imprisoned, then such person or persons and their heirs may bring their action or make their entry within ten years after the removal of such disability; and in case such person or persons die within the said term of ten years, under such disabilities, the heir or heirs of such person or persons have the same benefit that such person or persons might have had by living until the disabilities ceased; and if any proceeding upon such right or title is abated, the same may be renewed within three years from the time of such abatement. Act 26 March, 1785. In the city and county of Philadelphia, the right of entry and of action is barred after the expiration of forty years after the right first accrued. Acts 1851 and 1852. Thirty years' possession of land is evidence that the title has been parted with by the commonwealth, as between parties other than the commonwealth; and, as against the commonwealth, twenty-one years' possession perfects a defeasible estate. Act 27 April, 1855. Any ground-rent, annuity, or other charge upon real estate, is presumed to have been extinguished after the lapse of twenty-one years without any payment or other acknowledgment of its existence. Act 27 April, 1855. By the act of April 22, 1856, it is provided, that no exception respecting the limitation of actions in favor of persons under legal disabilities, shall extend, so as to permit any action for the recovery of any lands to be maintained after thirty years from the time the right of entry accrues. *Purd. Dig. Penn. Laws*, 1857, pp. 538, 539, 1131, 1185.

In *Rhode Island*, where any person or persons, or others from whom he or

they derive their title, either by themselves, tenants, or lessees, shall have been for the space of twenty years in the uninterrupted, quiet, peaceable, and actual seisin and possession of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, for and during the said time, claiming the same as his, her, or their proper, sole, and rightful estate in fee-simple, such actual seisin and possession gives a good title to such person or persons, their heirs and assigns forever; and one suing for the recovery of any such lands, may rely upon such possession as conclusive title thereto; and when pleaded in bar to an action, and duly proved, it is effectual in law for barring the same. These provisions are not to be construed or taken to prejudice the rights and claims of persons under age, *non compos mentis*, *feme covert*, or those imprisoned, or those beyond the limits, &c. of the United States, they bringing their suit therefor within the space of ten years next after such impediment is removed; or to bar any person having any estate in reversion or remainder, expectant or depending, in any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, after the end or determination of the estate for years, life, or lives; such person pursuing his title by due course of law, within ten years after his right of action shall accrue. R. I. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 148, §§ 2, 3, p. 339.

In *South Carolina*, the time for the prosecution of a right or title to land is limited to ten years. Persons under age are allowed five years to prosecute a title to land after coming of age, and persons beyond the seas, or out of the limits of the province, *feme covert*, or imprisoned, are allowed two years to prosecute their right or title after the removal of the disability; and persons *non compos*, one year after disability removed. S. C. Stat. at Large, Acts of 1712, 1744, 1788, 1824.

In *Tennessee*, seven years' adverse possession of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments granted by this State or the State of North Carolina, under a conveyance, devise, grant, or other assurance of title purporting to convey an estate in fee, without any claim by action at law or in equity commenced within that time, vests an indefeasible title in fee; and the neglect to sue for such property for seven years after the cause of action accrues, bars the action. No suit for any real property can be had but within seven years after the right accrues, except for such as have been reserved for the use of schools. Possession is not adverse when taken and continued under a title, bond, mortgage, or otherwise in subordination to another's right. If the person entitled to commence an action is, at the time the cause of action accrues, within the age of twenty-one years, or of unsound mind, or a married woman, or beyond the limits of the United States and the territories thereof, such person, or his representatives and privies, may commence the same within three years after the removal of such disability.

Upon the reversal or arrest of judgment, the plaintiff, *or those [*513] claiming under him, may commence a new action within one year. Tenn. Code, 1858, pp. 531, 532, §§ 2755, 2757, 2763 - 2768.

In *Texas*, one who has the right of entry into any real estate, must make entry therein within ten years after this right shall have accrued, or be forever barred. But if such person be under the age of twenty-one years, a

feme covert, or insane, or if forcible occupation of the premises, or county containing them, by a public enemy, prevent entry, the time of such disability is not computed as a part of the period of limitation. Peaceable possession is defined to be such as is continuous, and not interrupted by adverse suit to recover the estate. A suit for the recovery of real estate, as against one in possession under title or color of title, must be instituted within three years next after the cause of action shall have accrued; but in this limitation the duration of disability to sue, from minority, coverture, or insanity, is not computed. The term *title* is defined to mean a regular chain of transfer from or under the sovereignty of the soil; and color of title is constituted by a consecutive chain of such transfers down to the one in possession, without being regular, as for want of registry or such defect as may not extend to, or include the want of intrinsic fairness and honesty, or when the party in possession shall hold the same by a certificate of head right, land warrant or land script, with a chain of transfers down to him in possession, provided the right of the government shall not be barred. One who shall have had five years' like peaceable possession of real estate, cultivating, using or enjoying the same, and paying tax thereon, if any, and claiming under a deed or deeds, duly registered, is held to have full title, precluding all claims; but shall not bar the government; and saving to the person or persons having superior right and cause of action, the duration of disability to sue arising from non-age, coverture or insanity. Ten years of such peaceable possession and cultivation, use or enjoyment, without any evidence of title, gives to such naked possession, full property, preclusive of all other claims in and to six hundred and forty acres of land, including the improvement; yet the right of the government is not barred, and there is a saving to those under disability, as above. Oldham & White, Dig. Tex. Laws, 1859, p. 300.

In regard to the first provision of the act given above, it is held, that it was not intended, as might be supposed from the literal import of the terms, that every owner of real estate must, within ten years from the accrual of his title, make entry upon his lands, or be thereafter debarred of all right therein. *Horton v. Crawford*, 10 Tex. 382. This section bars the right of entry after ten years from the accrual of the right; but it applies only to cases in which the other party has had no adverse possession. *Redding v. Redding*, 15 Tex. 249.

In *Vermont*, no action for the recovery of any lands, or for the recovery of the possession thereof, can be maintained, and no entry can be made, unless within fifteen years next after the cause of action first accrued to the person entitled to the right, or those under whom he claims. If, at such time, any person entitled to such action is a minor or a married [*514] woman, insane, or imprisoned, the *action may be brought within the time limited, after the disability is removed. The same period of limitation applies to the State. *Verm. Comp. Stat. 1850*, ch. 61; *Verm. Gen. Stat. 1863*, ch. 63, §§ 1-3.

In *Virginia*, an entry on, or an action to recover any land, must be with-
[528]

in fifteen years next after the time at which the right first accrues. No continual or other claim preserves any right of making an entry, or of bringing an action. If the person entitled to such entry or action was, at the time the right first accrued, an infant, married woman, or insane, such person, or any other claiming through him, may make an entry or bring an action within ten years after the removal of the disability, or the death of such person under disability, provided the term of limitation be in no case extended beyond thirty years after the right first accrued. In case of the death of a person under disability, no further period beyond ten years is allowed by reason of any disability of any other person. If the suit is abated, or judgment is arrested or reversed, on a ground not affecting the right to recover, a new suit may be brought within one year. Va. Code, 1849, ch. 149, §§ 1-4, 18.

[529]



CHAPTER III.

TITLE BY GRANT.

SECT. 1. Public Grant.

SECT. 2. Title by Office Grant.

[*515]

*SECTION I.

PUBLIC GRANT.

1. Grant defined.
2. Of private act of parliament and king's grant.
3. Public grant as a source of title.
4. Of the aboriginal title to American lands.
5. No title in the Aborigines but to occupation.
6. Sovereignty and general property acquired by discovery.
7. Of grants by the crown to companies and proprietaries.
8. Jurisdiction over and disposal of lands by grantees of the crown.
9. Of lands lying outside of proprietaries under the crown.
10. United States government successors to the British government.
11. Mode of granting and disposing of public lands.
12. Nature and mode of issuing patents of lands.
13. Of the fee in public unsold lands.
14. Indian occupancy affecting grants of the fee.
15. Indian grant of lands northwest of the Ohio.
16. Of control of United States in conveying lands in States and Territories.
17. How far States may control the title of lands of the United States.
18. Of sovereignty and title in respect to newly-acquired territories.
19. The property in mines in the State of California.
20. The State of New York a successor to the crown as to public lands.
21. Of title to lands ceded by Virginia to the United States.
22. Sovereignty and title in the proprietary of Pennsylvania.
23. Of manorial grants in New York.
24. Doubtful grants construed in favor of the State.
25. A State cannot be disseised or maintain trespass.
26. Grant by the government a livery of seisin.
27. Of the power of the United States over shores of navigable rivers.
28. A State not barred by statute of limitation.

[530]

29. Of the modes by which titles may be transferred by United States.
30. A patent, when necessary to pass a title.
31. Patent only evidence of creation of title.
32. Patent of lands reserved from grant, void. [§516]
33. Effect of register's certificate of purchase made.
34. Of conflict between patent and entry and survey made.
35. How far a patent may be impaired collaterally.
36. Effect of entry and payment on the title to public land.
37. The fee remains in United States until patent issued.
38. Effect of patent obtained by fraud or against law.
39. Entry and purchase prevails over a subsequent location and survey.
- 40, 41. How courts apply the doctrine of legal and equitable rights to public lands.
42. When a patent may be set aside in favor of a prior right.
43. Public lands disposed of, only sections, quarter sections, &c.
44. Of grant on condition which becomes impossible.
45. Of right of heirs and representatives of purchasers without patents.
46. Who may make entry under a land warrant.
47. How far land warrants are regarded as real estate.
48. Of the doctrine of pre-emption of public lands.
49. Of public grants in New England and other original States.
50. Of confiscation of lands.

1. THOUGH the word grant was originally made use of in treating of conveyances of interests in lands, to denote a transfer by deed of that which could not be passed by livery, and, of course, was applied only to incorporeal hereditaments, it has now become a generic term, applicable to the transfers of all classes of real property, and will be used in that broad sense in speaking of the formal transfer of titles to lands.¹

2. In the English treatises upon this subject, one mode of creating titles to lands and hereditaments is said to be by private act of parliament, and another by the king's grant. By the former is meant, an act of parliament concerning a particular subject or person; by the latter, an act evidenced by letters patent under the great seal, granting something from the king to a subject.²

3. By public grant, as used in this chapter, is intended the mode and act of creating a title in an individual to lands

¹ 4 Kent, Com. 494, 550; Wms. Real Prop. 147, 195; Stat. 8 & 9 Vict. ch. 106, § 2; 3 Wood, Conv. 7; 2 Bl. Com. 310; *Dudley v. Sumner*, 5 Mass. 438, 471; Co. Lit. 301 b; *Lalor*, Real Estate, 249; 4 Kent, Com. 492.

² Cruise, Dig. Tit. 33, 34.

which had previously belonged to the government, in some cases the government being that of the United States, and in others, that of the respective States.

4. Upon the discovery and settlement of this country [*518] by *Europeans, there was a kind of ownership of the territory recognized in the native tribes, though there seems to have been no well-defined idea of individual property in lands on the part of the natives beyond, perhaps, the spot under immediate occupation.

5. Nor has any title, beyond the right of occupation, been recognized in the native tribes by any of the European governments or their successors, the Colonies, the States, or the United States. The law in this respect seems to have been uniform with all the Christian nations that planted colonies here. They recognized no seisin of lands on the part of Indian dwellers upon it, and the Indian's deed was simply regarded as an extinguishment of his claim, and not as passing the soil or freehold. The title gained by the grantee, under it, grew out of his making an actual entry upon the land under a claim of title. It is accordingly true, that in none of the English patents making grants of the country, is the Indian title excepted; and even Penn had begun to fix his settlement under his patent before he conferred with the Indians as to the lands.¹

6. The sovereignty and general property of the soil in the territory of the original English colonies, were claimed by and conceded to Great Britain, by right of discovery.² But the discovery of an island in the ocean gives the discoverer no title to the same. Such discovery confers on the United States the property in and sovereignty over the island, and all citizens have equal rights in respect to the same until exclusive rights have been derived from the United States.³ The claim of England to that part of this continent which lies between Newfoundland and the Gulf of Mexico, is based upon the discovery of that part of the coast by John Cabot in 1496.⁴

7. The right of soil, and, more or less, of sovereignty, were

¹ 4 Dane, Abr. 68-70.

² See *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 8 Wheat. 543, et seq.; *Martin v. Waddell*, 16 Pet. 367.

³ *Am. Guano Co. v. U. S. Guano Co.* 44 Barb. 27.

⁴ 1 Story, Const. 3.

granted to companies or proprietors by letters patent, under which communities were formed, with greater or less powers of jurisdiction and government, into colonies, provinces, or proprietaries, according to the style and form of their organization.¹

8. The jurisdiction over and disposal of the lands within the limits of these bodies politic were, as a general proposition, committed to and subjects of the immediate governing power thereof, in place of the original jurisdiction and property of the royal government.²

9. All lands, however, lying outside of these colonies, remained the property of the crown as representing the nation, subject to the Indian title of occupation, and this was also true of whatever lands the crown may have acquired by treaty from other European nations.³ It belongs to a treatise on history rather than upon law, to trace the changes that took place in the sovereignty over and the title to the public lands which belonged to the crown and the respective colonies, prior to the peace of 1783, when all jurisdiction of the mother country over the territories, afterwards embraced within the jurisdiction of the States, individually or collectively, was [*519] abandoned. It is therefore only necessary to start, so far as the general government is concerned, with the condition of things as they were left by the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

10. Whatever territory had belonged to the British government became the property of the general government, as successors to the British crown. To these lands were added those extensive regions, especially to the north and west of the Ohio, which New York, Virginia, Connecticut, and other States ceded to the United States as a common fund for the joint benefit of the Union, and also the more recent purchases of Louisiana and Florida, and the acquisitions of territory by cession from Mexico. All this public domain became, from time to time,

¹ *Worcester v. Georgia*, 6 Pet. 544. The chartered Colonies were Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The Provinces were New Hampshire, New Jersey, Virginia, the two Carolinas, and Georgia. The Proprietaries were Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York. 1 *Curtis, Const.* 425.

² *Jackson v. Hart*, 12 Johns. 81; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 478.

³ See *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 8 Wheat. 543; *Worcester v. Georgia*, 6 Pet. 548.

subject to the power of the general government to grant and dispose of as it saw fit, while so much of the lands as the several States acquired as successors to the Colonies, or by cession from the general government, and which had not been appropriated to the individual ownership of citizens, was subject to a like power on the part of those States respectively.¹

This sketch of the origin and character of the rights of property, and disposal of the public domain of the United States and that of the several States, will serve to explain the systems which have been adopted for the rights and the principles of legislation and adjudication to which they have given rise. No examination, however, will be attempted beyond the briefest possible notice, from the extent of the inquiry opened, in undertaking to treat of them in detail. A volume recently published, compiled, by Mr. Lester of the Department of the Interior, at Washington, contains, in one part, the several laws, public and private, passed by Congress upon the subject of the sale and disposition of the public lands, amounting in all to three hundred and sixty; while the decided cases contained in the reports of the courts of the United States and of the several States, may be counted by hundreds.

11. In the examination of the subject, the mode of granting lands adopted by the United States will be principally considered, though the analogy between that and the forms in use in many of the States is very close, except as to the [*520] character *of the surveys and divisions of the land.

The system which has been in operation for the last

¹ *Terrett v. Taylor*, 9 Cranch, 50. The Confederation of the Colonies was formed in 1777, but some of the smaller ones hesitated to come into it. One obstacle in the way was the claim of Virginia, New York, and some of the other Colonies, to what were called the crown lands, that had not been located and settled, though within what was claimed to be their charter limits. The indefinite terms in which the crown grants were made to several of these Colonies, were sources of conflict among them, and gave rise to claims of an almost unlimited extent beyond the actual settlements. The smaller Colonies who were excluded from these territorial claims, insisted that these lands ought to be deemed public domain and held by the Confederacy for public purposes. And Maryland refused to become a party to the Confederacy until 1781. In the mean time, New York had taken steps towards ceding the lands claimed by her, and was followed by Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia, and these lands were finally ceded "to be disposed of for the common benefit of the United States." 1 Kent, 259; 1 Story, Const. 215.

half century, provides, in the first place, for surveys of the public lands, and a division of the same into townships and sections, and a subdivision into halves, quarters, and eighths of sections, the townships consisting of 23,040 acres, and each section of 640 acres.¹ In disposing of these lands various modes have been adopted. Many of them have been disposed of by public sale, others by private *entry*, as it is called, upon the records of certain officers within the districts where the lands lie, by those wishing to purchase, while others are selected and designated by persons holding warrants from the government, given for meritorious services and other causes, which entitle the holders to choose and appropriate a certain number of acres, while in some cases these lands are disposed of by treaty or special acts of Congress which operate as grants.

12. The instrument which forms the evidence of title to lands acquired in either of these ways from the government, is called a Patent. It is signed by the President, or some one appointed to annex his signature, with the seal of the United States, and is designed to define the land intended to be granted,² and when regularly and properly issued, becomes a complete evidence of title. In like manner, patents under the States derive their authenticity from the great seal of the State being annexed to the same.³ As certain preliminary measures are required in case of a purchase of lands from the government, before issuing this patent, namely, the entry of the land with the proper officer, designating the section or part of section to be conveyed, and payment of the purchase-money, questions of conflicting claims have frequently arisen as to the validity of patents already issued, and as to priority of right in one or another to have a patent issued in his favor, which have been the subjects of adjudication of the courts of the United States. *And the same may be said of many of the [*521] more recent States, where a system of entry and issuing of patents has been adopted, similar in most respects to that of the United States. These general, and, in a measure, preliminary statements, will serve to explain the application of

¹ Walk. Am. Law, 42, 43.

² Owens v. Jackson, 9 Cal. 322.

³ The People v. Livingston, 8 Barb. 253; Doe v. McKilvain, 14 Ga. 252; Hulick v. Scovil, 4 Gilm. 174.

many of the doctrines laid down by the courts, without the necessity of giving a minute history of the several cases in which points of general interest have been decided.

13. In the first place, the fee of all the unsold lands in the United States, is either in the United States or in the States within which such lands are situated.¹ The Indian title, or that interest which originally belonged to the native tribes, was one of use or occupation only. It was, however, an interest which could only be divested by purchase or conquest. Accordingly, grants made by the State of Tennessee of the Cherokee lands, before the title of the tribe had been extinguished, were held to be void, and to pass no title to the grantee.² But this has reference to the source of title rather than the capacity to hold lands, for a patent from the United States to an Indian makes him the owner of the ultimate title, and renders him, as such, liable to be taxed therefor.³

14. But it would seem, that either the State or the United States, according as the one or the other owned the fee, may grant that, subject to such occupancy, but no possession can be taken until such right of occupancy is extinguished.⁴

15. But courts will not recognize a title to lands in the territory northwest of the Ohio river, acquired by an individual by grant from an Indian tribe, on the ground that the nation making the discovery of the country has the exclusive right to acquire the title of the aboriginal inhabitants.⁵ A title, therefore, conveyed by an Indian tribe, to any one other than the sovereignty, would be of no validity.⁶

[*522] *16. Although, as a general proposition, the title to

¹ *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 McLean, 412; *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 8 Wheat. 543, 571, et seq.; *Worcester v. Georgia*, 6 Pet. 543; *Fletcher v. Peck*, 6 Cranch, 87.

² *Gillespie v. Cunningham*, 2 Humph. 19; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 478.

³ *Blue Jacket v. Commissioners, &c.* 3 Kans. 349.

⁴ *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 McLean, 412; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Dougl. (Mich.) 546; *Fletcher v. Peck*, 6 Cranch, 87.

⁵ *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 8 Wheat. 571, where the general subject of Indian title is fully examined. *Worcester v. Georgia*, 6 Pet. 543.

⁶ *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 McLean, 412; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Dougl. (Mich.) 546; *Jackson v. Porter*, Paine, C. C. 457; *Jackson v. Hudson*, 3 Johns. 375; *Jackson v. Wood*, 7 Johns. 290; *Marshall v. Clark*, 4 Call, 268; *Stevens v. Smith*, 2 Kans. 243.

and disposition of land, are subject exclusively to the laws of the country where it lies,¹ yet all the lands in the territories are, in the first instance, the exclusive property of the United States, to be disposed of to such persons, at such times, and in such mode, as well as by such titles, as the government may deem proper, independent of locality. And no territory or State can interfere with the exercise of this control, nor affect the title of the United States by the exercise of the right of eminent domain.²

17. A State may by statute prescribe the remedies to be pursued in her courts, and may regulate the disposition of the property of her citizens, by descent, devise, or alienation. But where the United States has acquired a patent in order to pass a valid title of their lands to a purchaser, it is not competent for a State to declare that anything less than that shall originally pass a good title, though the land be situate within the limits of such State. The law of the United States in such cases is paramount to the law of the State, and the question whether a title in such case has passed from the United States, is to be determined by the law of the latter. But as soon as the title shall have passed from the United States, it takes the character of other property within the State, and is subject to State legislation.³

18. Sovereignty over a territory can never be in abeyance. Consequently, upon the acquisition of the present territory of California from Mexico, the sovereignty as well as the fee in all the public lands within its limits, and a full right to dispose of them, passed at once to the United States as successors to the former sovereign. This sovereignty passed to the State *when she became clothed with State powers by a law [*523] of Congress to that effect.⁴ And by this she holds the shores of the sea.⁵

¹ *United States v. Crosby*, 7 Cranch, 115; *Kerr v. Moon*, 9 Wheat. 565; *Darby v. Mayer*, 10 Wheat. 465; *Calloway v. Doe*, 1 Blackf. 372; *Cutler v. Davenport*, 1 Pick. 81; *Nims v. Palmer*, 6 Cal. 8.

² *Irvine v. Marshall*, 20 How. 558; *Pratt v. Brown*, 3 Wis. 603.

³ *Wilcox v. Jackson*, 13 Pet. 516, 517; *Bagnell v. Broderick*, 13 Pet. 436; *Canon v. White*, 16 La. An. 89.

⁴ *The People v. Folsom*, 5 Cal. 373; *Friedman v. Goodwin*, 1 McAll. Ch. 142.

⁵ *People v. Morrill*, 26 Cal. 353.

19. Though the title to and sovereignty over the public lands in California, passed from the crown of Spain to the government of Mexico, and through the latter to the United States, the ownership of the mines of gold and silver within the same, was incident to the ownership of the soil, and not to the sovereignty of the government, and, therefore, did not pass to the State when it became such. Such mines consequently pass with the soil to patentees claiming under the United States, unless expressly reserved in the grant.¹ Such lands as belong to the United States within the limits of California, since she became a State, are held by them as private proprietors, with the ordinary incidents of such ownership, except in the matter of taxation. The United States, therefore, could not prescribe rules of property or modes of its disposition or tenure, in derogation of the rights of the local sovereign, the State, to govern the relations of the citizens of the State. Like any other proprietor, therefore, they can only exercise the rights to the mineral on private property, in subordination to such rules as the local sovereign may prescribe.² So when Alabama became a State, she acquired the shores of the navigable streams within the same, by virtue of her sovereignty.³

20. Of the lands within the State of New York, not actually granted under the royal government, the people became the immediate successors to the crown.⁴ And when the Revolution took place, the people of the several States acquired the absolute right to all their navigable waters and to the soil under them.⁵

21. After the cession by Virginia to the United States of her military tract, she had nothing left for which she could issue a patent.⁶

22. In Pennsylvania, the soil of the province as well [*524] as the *sovereignty, in absolute fee-simple, was in the proprietaries upon the original constitution of that

¹ *Moore v. Smaw*, 17 Cal. 199, 222, overruling *Hicks v. Bell*, 3 Cal. 219.

² *Boggs v. Merced Co.* 14 Cal. 375, 376.

³ *Pollard v. Hagan*, 3 How. 230.

⁴ *The People v. Van Rensselaer*, 8 Barb. 189; *Van Rensselaer v. Hays*, 19 N. Y. 96.

⁵ *Martin v. Waddell*, 16 Pet. 367.

⁶ *Miller v. Lindsey*, 1 McLean, 32.

province.¹ In Massachusetts, the transition of title to the public lands, which, by the charter, was at first in the colonial government, was to that of the Province under the new charter, and from that to the Commonwealth at the revolution. The fee of the soil, therefore, from that time, was in the Commonwealth, unless the government of the colony or province had aliened it.² But the cession of territory from one sovereignty to another, does not, by the law of nations, independent of treaty stipulations, impair the rights of private property. The cession passes only public property, and sovereignty over the territory.³

23. It is well known to most readers, that in the early grants by the crown in the province of New York, large tracts of land were, in some cases, given to individuals with manorial rights attached thereto, and questions have arisen, within a few years, how far it was competent for the crown to create new manors, after the passage of the act of *Quia Emptores* by the English Parliament in the 18 Edw. I.⁴ It has, however, been held that the grant of lands with such privileges was not void, and that that statute did not restrain the king from granting to his own tenants authority to grant lands, to be holden of such tenants instead of the king as superior lord. And that even if the grant of the manorial privileges and franchises was void, it did not affect the validity of the grant of the land itself.⁵ But the courts of that State hold, that the principles of the statute above mentioned have always been the law of that State as well during its colonial condition, as after it became an independent body politic.⁶

24. In all questions of construction arising under grants, between the government and the citizen, a different rule prevails, in one respect, from that adopted in questions between

¹ *Penn v. Klyme*, 1 Wash. C. C. 297.

² *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 378.

³ *Teschemacher v. Thompson*, 18 Cal. 22; *United States v. Percheman*, 7 Peters, 87.

⁴ *Ante*, vol. 1, p. *30. The title of the holders of these manorial lands answered to the *emphyteusis* of the civil law. *Pomeroy's Introd.* 340; *Bouvier, Du Emphyteusis*.

⁵ *The People v. Van Rensselaer*, 5 Seld. 291.

⁶ *Van Rensselaer v. Hays*, 19 N. Y. 72, 74, controlling *De Peyster v. Michael*, 2 Seld. 467.

individuals. Between the latter, the construction, if doubtful, is always to be in favor of the grantee and against the grantor, whereas in the case of the government, the construction is always against the grantee and in favor of the government. The act, in the latter case, is done by an agent, and nothing will be presumed beyond the letter of the grant.¹ Thus, where the government granted an estate upon condition, which was broken, it was held at once to divest the title of the grantee without any entry or claim on the part of the grantors, as would have been necessary to defeat the estate if it had been a private grant.² The government is not subject to estoppel by a grant, unless it be by the description contained in a valid grant, nor to an implied warranty.³ This strictness of construction in favor of the sovereign and against the subject, applies only in cases where there is a real uncertainty or ambiguity in the terms of the grant. Nor, as it seems, is the rule applicable where the grant is for a valuable consideration. In such case, the rule of construction between the government and the subject is the same between private grantors and grantees. And the rule may be stated as a general one, in respect to legislative grants in this country, that such grants should be construed liberally in favor of the grantee, and in such a manner as to give them a full and liberal operation, so as to carry out the legislative intent, where that can be ascertained.⁴

[*525] *25. A State cannot maintain an action of trespass to try the title to land or an action of ejectment, because a State cannot be disseised. The remedy against a trespasser, in such case, in favor of the State, is by information for intrusion.⁵

¹ *Hagan v. Campbell*, 8 Port. 9; *Townsend v. Brown*, 4 Zab. 80; *Mayor, &c. v. Ohio & P. Railroad*, 26 Penn. St. 355; *Green's Estate*, 4 Md. Ch. Dec. 349; *Dubuque R. R. v. Litchfield*, 23 How. 88; *Gildart v. Gladstone*, 11 East, 685.

² *Kennedy v. M'Cartney*, 4 Port. 141.

³ *Elmendorf v. Carmichael*, 3 Litt. 472; *Mayor, &c. v. Ohio & P. Railroad*, 26 Penn. St. 355; *State v. Crutchfield*, 3 Head, 113.

⁴ *Hyman v. Read*, 13 Cal. 444, 452, 455, 458; *Charles River Bridge v. Warren Bridge*, 11 Pet. 589, 596, 601; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 492; *Martin v. Waddell*, 16 Pet. 411.

⁵ *State v. Arledge*, 1 Bail. 551; *Jackson v. Winslow*, 2 Johns. 80.

26. A grant of land by the government is tantamount to a conveyance with livery of seisin.¹

27. It has been held, that Congress does not possess the power of granting the shore of tidal navigable waters, at least within the State of Alabama.² But a State may grant the land adjacent to the shore and covered by the sea, subject to the right of navigation and fishing by the public in the waters of the sea. So it may grant an exclusive right of planting oysters, or erecting a wharf thereon.³

28. As a State cannot be disseised, so its rights cannot be barred by the statute of limitations, unless by express provision of some statute of its own.⁴

29. For the transfer by the United States or by a State, of the title of land, no particular form is required. It may be done by special act of legislation, by a clause inserted in a treaty by the treaty-making power, or by a patent issued by one authorized to represent the sovereignty. And where the assent of the President is required to give effect to a grant, but no form for this is prescribed, it may be done in any mode he may see fit, and when once given it cannot be revoked.⁵ And the legislature may, by a subsequent statute, confirm a grant which was void at the time of making it, and thereby give it validity, if it be of public land. A grant may be made by law, as well as by a patent issued pursuant to law; and a confirmation by law is as fully, to all intents and purposes, a grant, as if it contained, in terms, a grant *de novo*. And such grant, or confirmation, vests an indefeasible and irrevocable title.⁶ And where

¹ *Enfield v. Day*, 11 N. H. 520; *Enfield v. Permit*, 8 N. H. 512; *Bellows v. Copp*, 20 N. H. 492; *McCoughal v. Ryan*, 27 Barb. 376; *Doe v. Craft*, 1 Kerr, N. B. 546; *Robinson v. Lake*, 14 Iowa, 424.

² *Kemp v. Thorp*, 3 Ala. 291; *Mayor v. Eslava*, 9 Port. 577; *Pollard, Lessee, v. Hagan*, 3 How. 212; *Martin v. Waddell*, 16 Pet. 367.

³ *Phipps v. State*, 22 Md. 389.

⁴ *The People v. Van Rensselaer*, 8 Barb. 189; *Lindsey v. Miller*, 6 Pet. 666; *Jackson v. Winslow*, 2 Johns. 80; *Cary v. Whitney*, 48 Me. 516.

⁵ *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 McLean, 412; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Doug. (Mich.) 546, 560; *Fletcher v. Peck*, 6 Cranch, 87; *Sargent v. Simpson*, 8 Me. 148; *Grignon v. Astor*, 2 How. 319.

⁶ *Strother v. Lucas*, 12 Pet. 454; *Chouteau v. Eckhart*, 2 How. 372; *Challefoux v. Ducharme*, 8 Wis. 306; *Terrett v. Taylor*, 9 Cranch, 50; *Wilkinson v. Leland*, 2 Pet. 657; *Friedman v. Goodwin*, 1 McAll. Ch. 142; *Wilkinson v. Leland*, 2 Pet. 642.

a grant was made by the State of Pennsylvania to one upon his paying a certain sum, after a survey made, it was held, that upon a return of such survey and payment having been made, the title and legal possession of the land vested at once in the grantee.¹

[*526] *30. As a general proposition, a patent is necessary in order to pass a perfect and consummate legal title to public lands, with one exception, namely, where an act of Congress grants lands with words of present grant. And this proposition applies as well to prescriptions as to other purchases of public lands.² So in Kentucky, a patent is declared to be the completion of a legal title.³ So it is laid down, that a patent is a title from its date, and conclusive against all those whose rights did not commence previous to its emanation.⁴ But when granted, a patent enures to the benefit of any one to whom the patentee is bound to convey the land, or for whose use he ought to hold it.⁵ And where two patents have issued for the same land, the elder is the best evidence of title, and is conclusive against the junior, so long as it remains in force.⁶

31. And yet it has been laid down that the granting of the patent is a ministerial act,⁷ and that it does not pass the title, but is merely evidence that it has before passed, a doctrine which gives to the entry and payment of the purchase-money, virtually, the effect of creating the title to lands purchased.⁸

32. Accordingly, it was held, that where a patent had issued for lands which were, by law, reserved from sale, it was void.⁹ And so when made of land which had already been granted by treaty,¹⁰ or otherwise.¹¹

¹ *Potts v. Gilbert*, 3 Wash. C. C. 475.

² *Wilcox v. Jackson*, 13 Pet. 516; *Grignon v. Astor*, 2 How. 319.

³ *Green v. Lister*, 8 Cranch, 229.

⁴ *Hoofnagle v. Anderson*, 7 Wheat. 213; *Lindsey v. Miller*, 6 Pet. 677; *Stringer v. Young*, 3 Pet. 320; *Boardman v. Reed*, 6 Pet. 328.

⁵ *Hennen v. Wood*, 16 La. An. 263.

⁶ *Gallipot v. Manlove*, 1 Scamm. 156.

⁷ *Stoddard v. Chambers*, 2 How. 284; *Hunter v. Hemphill*, 6 Mo. 106; *Innerarity v. Mims*, 1 Ala. 660, where a condition appended to a patent which was not authorized by law was held to be void.

⁸ *Goodlet v. Smithson*, 5 Port. 243; *Waterman v. Smith*, 13 Cal. 419.

⁹ *Stoddard v. Chambers*, 2 How. 284; *Hunter v. Hemphill*, 6 Mo. 106.

¹⁰ *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Doug. (Mich.) 560; *Fletcher v. Peck*, 6 Cranch. 87.

¹¹ *Mayor v. De Armas*, 9 Pet. 223.

33. It is held, that a certificate of the register of the land-office, that a purchase had been made of lands, is of as high a nature as a patent itself.¹ But the issuing of a patent is always presumptive evidence in itself, that the previous proceedings have been regular, unless it can be shown that the land to *which it relates had been expressly [*527] reserved from sale.² Where, therefore, a patent and a certificate of payment for the same tract of land conflicted with each other, having been issued to different persons, the court intimate that the grantee of the United States by patent would be preferred, over the one who only held a certificate of payment.³

34. So it is held that a patent is a better legal title to land than an entry with the register and a survey,⁴ and that a patent is a conveyance from the primitive owner of the soil, its recitals being evidence against one who claims under him by a subsequent conveyance, or does not pretend to claim under him at all. And in an action of ejectment, a patent issued to the plaintiff is of itself evidence of title, which it is incumbent upon his adversary to rebut.⁵

35. So unless letters patent for land are void upon their face, or the issuing of them is without authority, or is prohibited by law, they cannot be impeached collaterally, in a court of law, upon the trial of an ejectment, and the same is true of a grant.⁶ The survey and patent, under the laws of the United States, are conclusive evidence of the title to the land embraced within their description. And where there had been two confirmations of the same land, the elder of these prevailed.⁷ A patent, moreover, relates back to the original land-office certificate, and the purchaser's title dates from that time.⁸

¹ *Jackson v. Wilcox*, 1 Scamm. 344; *Jennings v. Whitaker*, 4 Mon. 50.

² *Barry v. Gamble*, 8 Mo. 88; *Stringer v. Young*, 3 Pet. 320; *Boardman v. Reed*, 6 Pet. 328; *Winter v. Crommelin*, 18 How. 87.

³ *Goodlet v. Smithson*, 5 Port. 243.

⁴ *Griffith v. Deerfelt*, 17 Mo. 31.

⁵ *Steiner v. Coxe*, 4 Penn. St. 28; *Bagnell v. Broderick*, 13 Pet. 436; *Hill v. Miller*, 36 Mo. 182.

⁶ *The People v. Livingston*, 8 Barb. 253; *Curle v. Barrell*, 2 Sneed, 68; *Parker v. Claiborne*, 2 Swan, 565; *Stringer v. Young*, 3 Pet. 320; *Boardman v. Reed*, 6 Pet. 328.

⁷ *Willot v. Sanford*, 19 How. 79.

⁸ *Cavender v. Smith*, 8 Iowa, 360.

36. On the other hand, it has been held, that a purchaser from the United States, by the act of entry and payment, acquires an inchoate legal title which may be aliened, [*528] will descend, and *may be divested in the same manner as any other legal title; that an estate held by one, after certificate of final payment made, may be taken on execution before the patent has issued;¹ that land held by entry descends to heirs, or may be devised;² and that if one entitled to a certificate or patent under the law of Congress dies, the certificate or patent issues to his heirs.³ In another case it was held, that a certificate of final payment was such evidence of a legal title that an ejectment could be maintained upon it.⁴

37. And yet the fee of the land remains in the United States until the patent has actually issued, and this is a better legal title than a prior entry.⁵

38. A patent obtained by fraud, or against law, or for reserved lands, does not carry the legal title, nor affect a subsequent patent.⁶ And a purchaser, who has done all that the law requires of him to entitle him to a patent of land, cannot, be affected by the ignorance, negligence, or want of fidelity of the government officers.⁷ And if a register of the land-office has duly admitted the location of land, and granted a certificate thereof, a subsequent sale of the same land is void, although to a *bona fide* purchaser without notice.⁸

39. So an entry and purchase of land from the United States made *bona fide*, will prevail over a subsequent location and survey, confirmed by act of Congress.⁹

40. It may seem somewhat difficult to reconcile these various rulings and principles of construction, but it is apprehended that an explanation may be found, partly in the character of the parties engaged in the suits in which the ques-

¹ Goodlet v. Smithson, 5 Port. 243; Wright v. Swan, 6 Port. 84.

² Adams v. Logan, 6 Mon. 175.

³ Shanks v. Lucas, 4 Blackf. 476; Forsythe v. Ballance, 6 McLean, 562. See post, p. *531.

⁴ Bullock v. Wilson, 2 Port. 436. See also Copley v. Riddle, 2 Wash. C. C. 354; Vanhorn v. Chestnut, Id. 160.

⁵ Carman v. Johnson, 20 Mo. 108.

⁶ Wright v. Rutgers, 14 Mo. 585.

⁷ Nelson v. Sims, 23 Miss. 383.

⁸ Moyer v. McCullough, 1 Ind. 339.

⁹ Waller v. Von Phul, 14 Mo. 84.

tions arose, and *partly from the courts not care- [*529] fully discriminating between the legal and equitable title which the purchaser acquires, upon payment of his purchase-money, and before actually receiving his deed, whereby alone his legal title becomes complete. Where the ejectment has been brought against a stranger without title, the courts have been inclined to consider the equitable right to possession in the plaintiff as so far identical with his legal title, as to allow him to recover in a suit at law in his own name. This subject has arisen in different forms, in the courts, and from the opinions to which they have given rise, the explanation here made seems to be fully sustained. Thus, it was held, that neither the entry nor the survey was a *legal* appropriation of the land. The claimant, in such case, being only vested with the equitable estate until his entry and survey have been carried out by a grant.¹ But it was also held, that by entry and payment of the purchase-money, the purchaser of land from the United States acquires an inchoate legal title which may be aliened, descend, or be divested in the same manner as any other legal title.² The court, in the last case, cite a case from the United States court for the district of Pennsylvania, to show that the payment of the purchase-money and a survey, though unaccompanied by a patent, give a legal right of entry. In that case, one became entitled to land before the Revolution, under the king's proclamation; after the peace, Virginia ordered the warrant to issue to the assignee of the right under which the land was located, "by which means," say the court, "Sims acquired a complete equitable title, and one which only needed a *patent* of confirmation to render it a complete legal title." The court say further, "in which State (Pa.), payment and a survey, though unaccompanied by a patent, give a *legal right of entry*, which is sufficient in ejectment. Why they have been adjudged to give such right, whether from a defect of chancery powers, or for other reasons of policy or justice, is not now material." And Iredell, J., in the case cited, says: "A warrant *and survey, where no money remained [*530] to be paid, and a patent was only to ascertain that all previous requisites had been complied with, has been uniformly

¹ *Lindsey v. Miller*, 6 Pet. 666.² *Goodlet v. Smithson*, 5 Port. 243.

deemed a legal title, as opposed to an equitable one, and has all the consequences as such."¹ But in the United States courts, nothing short of a valid legal title will enable a plaintiff to recover in ejectment.² In a case in Kentucky, the court say: "An entry or survey for lands is an inchoate and incomplete legal title; they will descend, may be devised, or aliened, and they vest such legal interest as, under the provisions of the act, may be sold by virtue of execution."³ If a further suggestion might be ventured by way of explaining, and in part, at least, reconciling the seeming discrepancies which are found in the various decisions which are to be found in the books, it would be that, while in equity a purchaser acquires a good title to lands which he may have entered and actually paid for, and for which he holds the certificate from the proper officer, in order to prevail in a court of law, he must have a title by a patent. Thus it is held in Iowa, that, after the purchase from the United States, the purchaser acquires all the property which the United States had in the land, that the equitable and legal title passes from the United States, which only retains the formal technical legal title in trust for the purchaser until the patent issues. But even this strong language recognizes the legal title as only passing out of the United States to the purchaser by the delivery of the patent. So in the United States courts, it has been held that where land has been bought and paid for, a certificate to that effect makes it as much the land of the purchaser, as the patent itself. "Lands which have been sold by the United States can, in no sense, be called the property of the United States. They are no more the lands of the United States, than lands patented." But what follows explains the sense in which this language is used: "When sold, the government, until the patent shall issue, holds the mere *legal* title for the land, in trust for the purchaser, and any second purchaser would take the land charged with the trust." This doctrine is recognized by the courts of Iowa and Missouri, who hold that the patent does not invest the purchaser with any additional property in the land. It only gave him *better legal evidence* of the title which he first

¹ *Sims v. Irvine*, 3 Dall. 456, 465.

² *Fenn v. Holme*, 21 How. 481.

³ *Thomas v. Marshall*, 1 Hard. 19.

acquired by certificate. He could, in the mean time, sell and convey the land as completely before he obtained the patent, as he could after. The patent is not to be considered in conflict with this right, but rather contributes to its support and confirmation.¹ While regarded as evidence of legal title in a court of law, the patent is held by all the courts as the best, and, in fact, the only conclusive mode of establishing the fact of title, and is deemed conclusive, until avoided by fraud or evident mistake in the issuance of the same. Thus it is held, that a patent issued by government is evidence of title, not to be defeated but by showing an equitable or legal title which could not be defeated by the action of the land department, and in other cases it has been held, that a patent for land, emanating from the government of the United States, is the highest evidence of title, and in courts of law is evidence of the due performance of every prerequisite to its issuance, and cannot be questioned either in courts of law or equity, except upon ground of fraud or mistake; and if not assailed for fraud or mistake, it is conclusive evidence of title. Besides, in order to annul a grant of the government, the fraud must be actual and positive in fact, committed by the grantee in obtaining the grant.²

This subject has recently been considered by the court of California, and the effect to be given to a patent stated by the Chief Justice, in the following language: "The patent which is the final document issued by the government, is conclusive evidence of the validity of the original grant, and of its recognition and confirmation, and of the survey and its conformity with the confirmation, and of the relinquishment to the patentee of all interest of the United States in the land." "Individuals can resist the conclusiveness of the patent only by showing that

¹ *Cavender v. Smith*, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 189; s. c. 3 Greene, 349; *Arnold v. Grimes*, 2 Clarke (Iowa), 1; *Carroll v. Safford*, 3 How. 460; *Morton v. Blankenship*, 5 Mo. 346; *Carman v. Johnson*, 29 Mo. 94; *Dickinson v. Brown*, 9 Sm. & M. 130; *Sweatt v. Corcoran*, 37 Miss. 516; *Bagnell v. Broderick*, 13 Pet. 450; *Forbes v. Hall*, 34 Ill. 167; *McDowell v. Morgan*, 28 Ill. 532.

² *Leblanc v. Ludrique*, 14 La. An. 772; *Sweatt v. Corcoran*, *sup.*; *Bledsoe v. Little*, 4 How. (Miss.) 13; *Carter v. Spencer*, Id. 42; *Harris v. McKissack*, 34 Miss. 464; *Maxey v. O'Connor*, 23 Texas, 238; *Dickinson v. Brown*, 9 Sm. & M. 130. For what mistakes a patent will be avoided, see *Brush v. Ware*, 15 Pet. 93.

it conflicts with prior rights vested in them.”¹ In this he is fully sustained by the case of *Jackson v. Lawton*, in an opinion by Kent, C. J. : “ The patent granted to the lessor of the plaintiff being the elder patent, is the highest evidence of title. As long as it remains in force it is conclusive as against a junior patent for the same lands.”² And accordingly it was held that, to annul a patent absolutely, proceedings can only be taken by the government or some individual in its name, and that by *scire facias*, or by bill or information. Individuals can maintain no proceedings to that effect, the question being one exclusively between the sovereignty issuing the patent and the patentee.³

[*531] *41. The relation of lands thus situated is, perhaps, as well stated as can be, by the judge, McLean, in *Astrom v. Hammond*. “ Until the patent is issued, the purchaser has not the legal title, but having made his entry of the land, and paid for it, the government can no more dispose of the land to another person, than if the patent had been issued. The final certificate, obtained on payment of the money, is as binding on the government as the patent. Lands thus purchased go to the heirs and not the administrators, and, in some States, are liable to be sold on execution before the patent issues. When the patent issues, it relates back to the entry, and makes good any conveyance which the purchaser may have made.”⁴

42. A prior certificate of entry, where no patent has issued, gives a better title in equity than a patent issued upon a subsequent entry, and the patent will be set aside on a process for that purpose.⁵ So where a patent was dated February, 1822, of land which had been granted by the United States, and the grant accepted in December, 1821, it was held, that the title

¹ *Boggs v. Merced Co.* 14 Cal. 361, 362; *Luse v. Clark*, 18 Cal. 535; *Waterman v. Smith*, 13 Cal. 419.

² 10 Johns. 24.

³ *Boggs v. Merced Co.* 14 Cal. 365; *Jackson v. Lawton*, 10 Johns. 24; *Field v. Seabury*, 19 How. 332.

⁴ *Astrom v. Hammond*, 3 McLean, 107. See also *Mix v. Smith*, 7 Penn. St. 75; *Garretson v. Cole*, 2 Harr. & M'H. 459; *West v. Hughes*, 1 Harr. & J. 6; *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 453; *Cavender v. Smith*, 5 Iowa, 189; *Carman v. Johnson*, 29 Mo. 94.

⁵ *Hester v. Kembrrough*, 12 S. & M. 659; *Warren v. Shuman*, 5 Tex. 441; *Hunt v. Wickliffe*, 2 Pet. 201.

was in the grantee in preference to the patentee.¹ But ejectment will not lie upon an entry in a land-office. It will only lie upon a patent.²

43. Under the United States' system of disposing of the public lands, it is not competent for the surveyor-general to divide a fractional part of a section by arbitrary lines, so as to prevent a regular quarter section from being taken up by entry, if the fraction will admit of such a division,³ and it is always deemed a sufficient description of land to refer to it by the range, township, and section, as contained in the public surveys.⁴

44. If, in making a grant, there be a condition subsequent annexed which becomes impossible by act of the grantor, the estate becomes absolute.⁵

*45. Different rules have been adopted by different [*532] courts, in case of the decease of a person entitled to the benefit of an entry and purchase of land before any patent has issued, some of which have already been stated.⁶ In one case, a patent which had issued to a person then deceased, was held to enure to the benefit of his heirs in the same manner as if it had issued in his lifetime.⁷ In another, such patent was held to be void,⁸ while in another, it was held, that an entry and survey in the name of a dead man is void, though he held a warrant therefor in his lifetime.⁹

46. An entry under a land warrant, can only be made in the name of the person to whom it was issued, or that of his assignee.¹⁰ And a patent issued to a fictitious person conveys no title to the land therein described.¹¹

47. It may be stated that, in some of the States, land warrants are not regarded as real estate in the settlement and distribution of estates in the probate office.¹² But a different doc-

¹ *Cabanne v. Lindell*, 12 Mo. 184.

² *Hooper v. Scheimer*, 23 How. 235.

³ *Brown v. Clements*, 3 How. 650.

⁴ *Bledsoe v. Doe*, 4 How. (Miss.) 13.

⁵ *United States v. Arredondo*, 6 Pet. 691. ⁶ *Ante*, p. *527.

⁷ *Schedda v. Sawyer*, 4 McLean, 181.

⁸ *Wood v. Ferguson*, 7 Ohio St. 288; *Galloway v. Finley*, 12 Pet. 264.

⁹ *Price v. Johnston*, 1 Ohio St. 390.

¹⁰ *Galt v. Galloway*, 4 Pet. 332.

¹¹ *Thomas v. Wyatt*, 25 Mo. 24; *Thomas v. Boerner*, *Id.* 27.

¹² *Moody v. Hutchinson*, 44 Me. 57.

trine is held in Virginia and Ohio, in respect to land, where one who is entitled to a patent dies before it is issued. The right, unless devised, goes to his heirs.¹

48. In addition to the interests in public lands, and the modes of acquiring the same under the several acts of the United States, there is a "right of pre-emption," so called, secured by law to actual settlers upon lands, who have entered upon and occupied the same without title, whereby such settler may secure to himself a title to a quarter section at the minimum price fixed by law to be paid for such lands, by entering the same in the proper office and making payment therefor, thereby excluding all other persons from entering and purchasing the same lands. This right cannot be exercised in respect to any lands of which the Indian right of occupancy has not been extinguished.² This right gives no title, in fact, to the land, so that one can convey or encumber it. It is a [*533] mere right to acquire *the legal title at a certain price, in preference to others.³ And though it was held, in Illinois, that it was a right which might be transferred by deed as property, it gave merely a right of occupancy, and a right to acquire the legal title.⁴ A pre-emptive right confers no title, until the holder of it makes an entry and pays for the land.⁵ But when one, having such right, conveyed it with covenants in his deed that if he should acquire a title it should enure to the benefit of the grantee, it bound by estoppel all persons claiming through the grantor, with a knowledge of the deed.⁶ The object and meaning of these pre-emption laws, which have been numerous at different times, are thus explained. The pre-emption law gives a preference to the actual settler, excluding the rights of all others so long as this preference can be claimed. It constitutes an equity in favor of the occupant, located upon and identified and attached to the particular quarter section, occupied and cultivated by the claimant. The act of Congress was an appropriation of all land so occupied,

¹ *Brush v. Ware*, 15 Pet. 93; *Reeder v. Barr*, 4 Ohio, 458.

² *Russell v. Beebe*, 1 Hempst. 704.

³ *Craig v. Tappin*, 2 Sandf. Ch. 78; *Brown v. Throckmorton*, 11 Ill. 529.

⁴ *Delaunay v. Burnett*, 4 Gilm. 454.

⁵ *Phelps v. Kellogg*, 15 Ill. 131.

⁶ *Ibid.*

and during the time prescribed by statute, the occupant had a right to make an entry to the exclusion of all other entries. A patent issuing to such an one, is superior in a court of equity to a prior patent issuing upon a mere entry, although the latter patent is prior in date to the former one, based upon a senior pre-emption right. The patent relates to the inception of title, and, in a court of equity, the person who has first appropriated the land has the best title.¹ And when, under a pre-emption right, the entry was made in the name of "the heirs," without naming them individually, it was held to be a valid entry.² The pre-emptive right to enter lands, which has been acquired by an intestate, descends to his heirs.³

49. The subject would, obviously, be incomplete without *noticing, more at length, the titles which [*534] have been acquired by public grant in some, if not all of the New England States, under a system which had grown up while they were colonies.

King James I. made a grant of all that part of America lying between the fortieth and forty-eighth degrees of latitude, "and in length of, and within all the breadth aforesaid, throughout all the main lands from sea to sea," to the Plymouth Company in England. In 1629, this corporation granted the territory of the Colony of New Plymouth to Bradford and his associates, who had, for years, been in possession thereof, and exercised the power of disposing of the lands therein. The same company, by deed or charter, conveyed to Sir Henry Roswell and others, the territory of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, in 1627, and a patent, incorporating the grantees as a government, was made to them by King Charles in 1628. This government assumed the right to divide out and grant the lands in the Colony, independent of any other authority. And in this way, the territory of many townships had been granted to proprietors, or companies of proprietors, who were made corporations for the purpose of managing such territory, and was regulated and controlled by the legislation of the Colony, in which both the soil and the sovereignty of the

¹ *McAfee v. Keirn*, 7 S. & M. 780; *Pettigrew v. Shirley*, 9 Mo. 683; *United States v. Fitzgerald*, 15 Pet. 407.

² *Hunt v. Wickliffe*, 2 Pet. 201.

³ *Johnson v. Collins*, 12 Ala. 322.

territory were united. These legislative grants vested in the grantees and their heirs, estates in common, and such is the rule of construction in respect to all grants made to two or more persons by virtue of acts or resolutions of the legislature.¹ Thus, among other acts, authority was given in 1636, to the freemen of every town to dispose of their lands.² A simple act of incorporation, however, without words of grant of the soil, would vest no part of the property of the government in such town.³ It is said, besides, that no formal act of incorporation of any of these towns was passed during the continuance of the colonial charter.⁴ There was a practice after the establishment of the provincial government by the charter of 1692, to grant a tract of land or township to a body of individuals named, constituting them proprietors and tenants in common, with a view to their incorporation afterwards as a town. But then they took the fee in the land by force of the act of incorporation, when once passed.⁵ * It is apprehended, that not only had extensive grants been made by the Colony, by means of legislative acts, under its first charter, but that the titles of individuals were, in numerous instances, mere grants from towns or proprietaries, evidenced by no other act or instrument than the votes adopted and recorded by those bodies corporate. But upon the dissolution of the charter under which these titles had taken their rise, one of the first measures of Andros, the new governor, was to treat them as of no validity, and to require the proprietors to take out new grants and patents from the crown. The mischief threatened by such a sweeping overthrow of titles was obviated by the forcible deposition of the governor, and the grant of a *new charter in 1692, embracing Plymouth and Massachusetts, with the Province of Maine, Sagadahoc, Nantucket, and

* NOTE. — For a further account of the charter and its history, see 9 Gray, 505, *et seq.*

¹ Higbee v. Rice, 5 Mass. 350.

² Rogers v. Goodwin, 2 Mass. 475; Commonwealth v. Roxbury, 9 Gray, 479; Sulliv. Land, Tit. 37, 48, 49; Mass. Col. Law, 195; Commonwealth v. Alger, 7 Cush. 53, 66.

³ Commonwealth v. Roxbury, 9 Gray, 494, 500.

⁴ Id. 485 *et seq.* 511.

⁵ Id. 500, 501.

Martha's Vineyard, by which the land was granted to the inhabitants of the Province, and the former grants already made, were ratified and confirmed, and the General Court, with the approbation of the governor, had authority to make new grants. At the Revolution, the State became successor to the Province, with all its rights as to lands then undisposed of.¹ In disposing of these lands, the General Court still continued to proceed by way of grants by legislative acts, and to create proprietaries who managed their business as corporations, by means of recorded votes.* It has, accordingly, been held, that the government may grant the lands of the commonwealth without any deed. And where the General Court granted lands to proprietors by vote, which bounded upon the sea, in 1640, it was held that their subsequent ordinance of 1647, annexing the flats adjacent to upland so as to pass with that, enured to the benefit of these first-mentioned proprietors.² And the doctrine that a State may grant its lands by a resolve of its legislature, is adopted both in Maine and California, and may be effectual without a deed or a patent.³ But where the legislative resolve contains no words of grant, but simply authorizes a public officer to convey land to the person named, the title will not pass till such deed is executed and delivered.⁴ In grants of townships in Massachusetts, the fee of the land vested in the proprietors, who might grant their lands to individuals, and, among other things, they might grant the waters of the ponds therein, and rights of control over these. But, after

* NOTE. — In some cases grants of a million or more acres were made, as in the case of the Kennebec, Pejepscut, and Waldo Patents. In 1712, proprietors of common lands were, by law, authorized to organize themselves and act as corporations, and to manage their lands by corporate votes. This general power of proprietors of wharves, common lands, &c. to act as corporations, still subsists, though it is apprehended it is no longer competent for such proprietaries to convey their lands by vote. 4 Dane, Abr. 120; Gen. Stat. ch. 67. See *Higbee v. Rice*, 5 Mass. 350.

¹ *Sulliv. Land Tit.* 55, 57; 1 *Barry, Hist. Mass.* 493-495; *Washb. Jud. Hist.* 112.

² *Tappan v. Burnham*, 8 *Allen*, 72; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 *Gray*, 498.

³ *Cary v. Whitney*, 48 *Maine*, 526; *Megerle v. Ashe*, 27 *Cal.* 327; *Kernan v. Griffith*, 27 *Cal.* 89. See also *Mayo v. Libby*, 12 *Mass.* 339.

⁴ *Cary v. Whitney, sup.*; *Thorndike v. Richards*, 13 *Me.* 430.

the ordinances of 1641 and 1647, "great ponds were to be held for the public use of the inhabitants thereof, for fishing, fowling, bathing, and the use of the waters for washing, watering cattle, &c." The cutting of ice is one of these uses, so is boating, skating or riding on the ice, and all these are free and lawful to all persons who can obtain lawful access to them over their own lands, or those of others without being trespassers. But they are not to be used by any so as to interfere with the reasonable use of these ponds by others.¹ It has been done by resolve, and, since the adoption of the constitution, committees of the legislature have given deeds setting forth the authority under which they acted, and affixing their own seals.² In construing legislative conveyances, great liberality was applied in carrying out the intention of the grants, giving to these votes the effect of limiting a fee without words of succession, or inheritance, when necessary.³ Such grants made the grantees tenants in common.⁴ And when, in 1651, an act of the legislature required that "heirs" should be inserted in the *habendum* of deeds, in order to carry a fee, grants by towns were excepted.⁵

Probably, therefore, a very large proportion of the early estates in Massachusetts and Maine, were held by no better title than a vote of the legislature, or that of proprietaries acting as ordinary corporations. Originally, it seems, it was supposed that this power of towns and other proprietaries to dispose of their lands by votes of majorities, was intended only to apply to a partition of them into shares among themselves. But it soon grew to be a customary mode of making grants of lands to others, and the titles thus created have been recognized as valid by the courts.⁶ But it is said by the court of New Hamp-

¹ *Berry v. Roddin*, 11 Allen, 577; *West Roxbury v. Stoddard*, 7 Allen, 158, 171.

² *Ward v. Bartholomew*, 6 Pick. 414.

³ *Baker v. Fales*, 16 Mass. 497.

⁴ *Higbee v. Rice*, 5 Mass. 350. See *Hyman v. Read*, 13 Cal. 444, 455; *Feoffees of Grammar School, &c. v. Andrews*, 8 Met. 591.

⁵ 4 Dane, Abr. 61.

⁶ *Rogers v. Goodwin*, 2 Mass. 475, 477; *Anc. Chart.* 402, 403; *Codman v. Winslow*, 10 Mass. 146, 150; *Adams v. Frothingham*, 3 Mass. 352; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 479; *Plymouth, Col. Laws*, 29, 30, 198; *Decker v. Freeman*, 3 Me. 338; *Pike v. Dyke*, 2 Me. 213; *Thomas v. Marshfield*, 10 Pick. 367; *Springfield v. Miller*, 12 Mass. 417; *Bachelor v. Wakefield*, 8 Cush. 247;

shire, that "towns cannot now pass the title to real estate by a vote."¹ This doctrine of legislative grant has been adopted also in New Hampshire, and, in applying it, their courts hold, that no particular terms are necessary to constitute a grant by the legislature, and where they have fixed a particular line as the line of a township, the State is estopped to say that the title of the proprietors of the township does not extend to such line, and that a State may be estopped by the acts of its legislature.² In a case in Maine, Massachusetts, before their separation, in order to quiet the title of certain lands to the settlers in the town, authorized a committee to execute releases to these settlers, respectively, of the interest of the commonwealth in the land. The occasion for doing this was, that *the [*536] commonwealth, while a province, had granted the township, when, by the terms of the charter of 1692, it was necessary for the king to approve of the grant in order to its validity. This had never been done, and consequently nothing has passed by such former grant, and, as successors to the province, the commonwealth might claim the land. Nor was the State disseised, though there were persons in possession of the lands claiming them. The committee, instead of executing a deed of release, made one by which the interest of the State was granted, sold, and quitclaimed, and a question arose whether this was a valid exercise of the power delegated to them. But it was held, that the deed, as given, might be construed as a deed of release, and that it was competent for the commonwealth, in the exercise of its legislative power, to prescribe any form they might deem expedient, and that the same would be effectual, though, if used by an individual or a corporation, it would have been inoperative.³ And in a similar case it was held, that, whether the deed was in proper form or not, the resolve itself, authorizing the release to be made, was

Green v. Putnam, 8 Cush. 25; *Shrewsbury v. Smith*, 14 Pick. 297; *Higbee v. Rice*, 5 Mass. 350; *Gloucester v. Gaffney*, 8 Allen, 11; *Cary v. Whitney*, 48 Me. 526, and a vote of proprietors authorizing a committee to sell lands empowers the committee to make deeds in the name of the proprietors. *Thorndike v. Barrett*, 3 Me. 380.

¹ *Cofran v. Cockran*, 5 N. H. 461.

² *Enfield v. Permit*, 5 N. H. 280.

³ *Hill v. Dyer*, 3 Me. 441.

itself virtually a grant.¹ In closing this subject it is only necessary to add; that it was always competent for the State or proprietaries to make grants by means of deeds executed by agents or committees chosen and appointed for that purpose, and that such is the mode which has been adopted for many years, in disposing of the public lands.²

50. Since the publication of the first edition, circumstances have unfortunately occurred which render it proper to briefly refer to one other mode of changing the title to lands by the action of the government, and that is by confiscation. In doing this, it will only relate to an earlier period of history than the present. It was a measure resorted to by the governments of Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, Georgia, and, probably, of the other Colonies, against those who continued to adhere to the crown at the time of the Revolution. They were regarded as conspirators against the government. In Massachusetts, the legislature, at first, by special acts, declared that certain persons by name, were conspirators and absentees, and that their estates should escheat to the commonwealth. Out of these, provision was made for the payment of their debts, and for the wives of such as remained within the government. But no trial or judicial proceedings were required before the escheat was to take effect. By a subsequent act, 1779, a general provision was made whereby the estates of such as had levied war or conspired to do so against any of the Colonies, or the United States, were declared to be escheated. But before any estate could be adjudged, forfeited, and confiscated, it required judicial proceedings to be had. These proceedings were commenced and carried on by the public prosecuting officer, and, upon an adjudication had, commissioners, of whom there were a certain number appointed in each county, proceeded to sell and pass deeds to convey the same, in the name of the commonwealth, which were valid if executed by a major part of such commissioners. It was usual, upon such proceedings of escheat, for the court to issue a writ of *habere facias*. But it was decided, that this for-

¹ Sargent v. Simpson, 8 Me. 143, 148. See Lambert v. Carr. 9 Mass. 185.

² See Church v. Gilman, 15 Wend. 656, and such deed must be proved to have been delivered, as any other deed. Hulick v. Scovil, 4 Gilm. 174.

mality was not necessary in order to perfect the title in the purchaser, the judgment being conclusive of the right, and the deed perfecting the title. In New York, the proceedings seem to have been by a simple legislative act of attainder, whereby the estate of the delinquent was declared forfeited to the State, and was then disposed of by commissions of forfeitures.¹

¹ 4 Dane, Abr. 77, 703, 707; *M'Neil v. Bright*, 4 Mass. 282; *Gilbert v. Bell*, 15 Mass. 44; *Higginson v. Mein*, 4 Cranch, 415; *Jackson v. Catlin*, 2 Johns. 248, 260; *McGregor v. Comstock*, 17 N. Y. 164.

SECTION II.

TITLE BY OFFICE GRANT.

1. What conveyances are included in this term.
2. Of modes of applying lands of debtor to pay debts.
3. Of sales by executors and administrators.
4. Of sales by guardians.
5. Of the limits of the power of legislation in transferring title.
6. Of sales by decrees of courts of chancery.
7. Effect of a decree, on title, before deed made.
8. Of sales made under builder's liens, &c.
9. Of sales for payment of taxes.
10. Power of taxation incident to government itself.
11. Lands held under public grant liable to tax.
12. Power to sell for taxes a naked one.
13. Recitals in a tax deed no evidence against original owner.
14. Purchaser under tax sale to see that proceedings are correct.
15. What a purchaser under tax sale must prove, as to title.
16. No power of sale attaches till prerequisites are complied with.
17. A tax deed not of itself evidence of a compliance with the statute.
18. Exceptions by which such deeds are *prima facie* evidence of title.
19. Requisites of such deeds as to form.
20. Tax deed must be delivered to be valid.
21. How far the deed must recite the power by which it is made.
22. The deed must be to the one who bids off the land.
23. How far necessary to record a tax deed.
24. Effect of the death of original owner, and what deed is null.
25. Of the redemption of lands sold for taxes.
26. Of selling lands of proprietaries for assessments.
27. General considerations as to titles by official grants.
28. How far the original judgment, decree, &c. are open to inquiry.
29. How far competent to deny the allegations of an officer as to his own act.
30. The official return of the doings of a ministerial officer conclusive.

1. There are several modes and forms of divesting the title of one owner to lands, and creating a title to the same in another, which derive their force and effect from statute provisions, *whereby conveyances are made by some officer of the law to effect certain purposes where the owner is either unwilling or unable to execute the requisite deeds to pass the title. Among these are levies or sales to

[554]

satisfy execution creditors, sales by order or decree of a court of chancery, sales by orders or licenses of courts, or by special acts of the legislature for the payment of the debts of persons deceased, or the investment of funds for infants, and the like, and sales made under the provisions of the statutes of the several States, for the enforcement of the payment of taxes, or of special liens thereon.

This mode of creating title which, for convenience, may be called *title by office grant*, would open too extensive and varied a field of inquiry to consider in detail, and the examination is therefore confined to limits more suitable to a work like the present. To carry the purposes of such levy or sale into effect, implies the execution of a statute power, varying according to the subject-matter upon which it is exercised. The subject of levies and sales of land upon execution was spoken of in a former part of this work,¹ where a summary of the several statutes relating to it may be found. The reader will also find it treated of by Chancellor Kent in the fourth volume of his commentaries,² and to these he is referred, with what may be hereafter said of the requisite formalities to be observed in the terms and execution of such and similar deeds.

2. But it may be observed that whatever is the form prescribed by statute whereby the land of a debtor is appropriated by act of law to the payment of a judgment creditor, the title thereby acquired is, to all intents, as valid and effectual, with few if any exceptions, as if it had been conveyed by the debtor himself by a deed in the proper and requisite form. It is the policy of the law, in all the States, to give to creditors a right to avail themselves of the property of their debtors, with certain limitations and restrictions, and which is to apply as well to the case of deceased as living debtors, and the law, accordingly, provides means for carrying out this policy.

*In case of persons dying intestate, provision is made [*538] whereby courts are authorized to empower their administrators to sell and convey the lands of the deceased, and thereby to pass a good title to the same. The same is true in respect to testate estates of persons indebted, whose executors are not empowered by their wills to make sale of their lands.

¹ Vol. 1, p. *464, *et seq.*

² 4 Kent, Com. 428, *et seq.*

8. In these cases, as the executor or administrator acts solely under a power conferred by statute, he must, in order to render the sale effectual, comply with the various requirements of the statute, and, regularly, the deed by which it is attempted to pass the title to a purchaser, should show, upon its face, a recital of the steps which have been taken in consummating the sale, as well as a statement of the authority by which it is executed; though it would, probably, be sufficient if the deed in any part of it showed the capacity in which, and the power under which, the person executing it acted in making the conveyance.¹ If a will, under which an executor acts, authorizes him to sell testator's lands, there is no need of a surrogate's order to make his sale effectual.² But in order to the receiving of an executor's deed as valid and effectual, it must be shown, preliminary thereto, that the statutory requirements have been complied with, or that an express power was given in the will under which he acts.³ There are cases where the law will presume that an act required by law to be done, is done, as where it is imposed upon one as a duty, and a failure to perform the act would make him guilty of a criminal neglect of such duty. So the regularity of official proceedings will often be presumed after a long lapse of time. Thirty years have been held sufficient.⁴

4. Much and perhaps all that has been said of sales of estates of deceased persons, would apply to sales by guardians of

¹ *Kingsbury v. Wild*, 3 N. H. 30; *Griswold v. Bigelow*, 6 Conn. 258; *Lockwood v. Sturtevant*, 6 Conn. 373; *Planters Bank v. Johnson*, 7 Smedes & M. 449; *Campbell v. Knights*, 26 Me. 224; *Jarvis v. Russick*, 12 Mo. 63; *Worthy v. Johnson*, 8 Ga. 236; *Sheldon v. Wright*, 1 Seld. 497; *Jones v. Taylor*, 7 Tex. 240; *Doolittle v. Holton*, 28 Verm. 819; *Longworth v. Bank of United States*, 6 Ohio, 536. If land is regularly sold on execution, a reversal of the judgment afterwards will not divest the title of the purchaser. *Feyer v. Keefer*, 6 Watts, 297. But a sale by a sheriff, of land not belonging to the judgment debtor, gives no title or right of entry to the purchaser. *Smith v. Steele*, 17 Penn. St. 30. A sale on execution relates back to the time when the judgment became a lien, cutting off intermediate interests. *Fell v. Price*, 3 Gilm. 190. See *Boyd v. Longworth*, 11 Ohio, 252; *Alexander v. Merry*, 9 Mo. 514.

² *Payne v. Payne*, 18 Cal. 291.

³ *White v. Moses*, 21 Cal. 44.

⁴ *Williams v. East India Co.* 3 E. 192, and cases illustrating this on pp. 199, 200; *Hartwell v. Root*, 19 Johns. 347; *King v. Hawkins*, 10 E. 211; 1 Greenl. Ev. § 80; *Ib.* § 20.

minors, spendthrifts, lunatic persons, &c., when made by license and authority of courts under the statutory provisions of the several States. These statutes prescribe the requisite steps to be taken and formalities to be observed to give effect to such sales, and it is necessary that these should be, substantially, and often strictly complied with, in order to give validity to any deed which may be executed under such power. But it would occupy space which can be better employed upon other topics, to undertake to give the statutes of the several States

*regulating these and sales by executors or administrators, or any considerable number of the cases upon the subject which are scattered through the volumes of reports.

5. The same may be said of any attempt to define the power of the legislature, by special laws, to authorize sales or to ratify imperfect sales made by persons acting officially, or to transfer the title of lands from one person to another, such as the special act, in one case, where an executor of a will, made and proved in New Hampshire, sold lands in Rhode Island without authority, to pay debts of the deceased, and the title was confirmed by the legislature of Rhode Island.¹ This opens an interesting inquiry upon a subject which has often been before the courts, but upon which their decisions have not been uniform. It is not proposed to consider these decisions in detail, and it may be remarked, that very little aid in furnishing a guide by which to determine the questions involved, can be derived from the action of the British Parliament, to whose power there is no such limitation as is provided in the American constitutions, and the checks which courts are thereby authorized to interpose to the action of the legislature. As a general proposition, a legislature may do any thing not inhibited by the constitution. Beyond that it is omnipotent.² But a law so passed as to depend upon a vote of the people whether it shall take effect or not, if it be a general one, is not

¹ *Wilkinson v. Leland*, 2 Pet. 627; s. c. 10 Pet. 294. But see *Jones v. Perry*, 10 Yerg. 59; *Lane v. Dorman*, 3 Scamm. 238; *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 30, 31; *Bott v. Perley*, 11 Mass. 169, 174. See also *Price v. Huey*, 22 Ind. 25; *Florentine v. Barton*, 2 Wall. U. S. 210.

² *Chicago v. Larned*, 34 Ill. 280; *Clarke v. Rochester*, 24 Barb. 470, 480, 489; *Wellington v. Petitioners, &c.* 16 Pick. 95; *Merrill v. Sherburne*, 1 N. H. 199.

a valid act of legislation.¹ The government has a right to provide the mode in which existing rights may be forfeited, but it cannot transfer or deprive the citizen of them, except for an offence against the laws of the government.² A legislature cannot pass a retrospective act which shall impair vested rights. But this does not apply to remedial statutes, provided they do not impair contracts, but only go to confirm rights already existing, or provide a remedy to cure defects.³ Thus a statute giving validity to deeds made by married women, defectively executed, was held good.⁴ In respect to the right to take private property, by the exercise of what is called eminent domain in the State, there is little that needs to be said. It can only be done for public uses, and that upon making a just compensation to the owner for the same. To that extent, it is a power inherent in the sovereignty of every State, and is based upon the idea that private interests must yield to public necessity.⁵ The only restriction upon this power is, that it should provide for compensation being made.⁶ But this power does not imply any right on the part of the State to take the property of one citizen and give it to another, whether with or without compensation.⁷ An act taking the estate of A and giving it to B was held void, though passed while the State was a Colony.⁸ This power can be exercised by the direct action of the legislature, or by creating corporations with authority to take lands where it is for a public use, like the

¹ *Clarke v. Rochester*, *sup.*; *Barto v. Himrod*, 4 Seld. 483.

² *Russell v. Rumsey*, 35 Ill. 374.

³ *Dentzel v. Waldie*, 30 Cal. 144; 1 Kent, 455.

⁴ *Chestnut v. Shane*, 15 Ohio, 599; *Mercer v. Watson*, 1 Watts, 355; *Watson v. Mercer*, 8 Peters, 108; *Tate v. Stooltzfoos*, 16 S. & R. 35.

⁵ See *Commissioners, &c. v. Withers*, 29 Miss. 21, as to appropriating waters of public streams, &c. for public use. *Heyward v. Mayor N. Y.* 3 Seld. 324; *Taylor v. Porter*, 4 Hill, 143; *Buffalo R. R. v. Brainard*, 5 Seld. 108; *Carson v. Coleman*, 3 Stockt. Ch. 108; *Chicago v. Larned*, 34 Ill. 276; *Clarke v. Rochester*, 24 Barb. 481; *Moale v. Baltimore*, 5 Md. 314.

⁶ *East Tenn. & V. Railroad v. Love*, 3 Head, 64.

⁷ *Varick v. Smith*, 5 Paige, 159; *Arrowsmith v. Burlingim*, 4 McLean, 495; *Powers v. Bergen*, 2 Seld. 358; *People v. Mayor, &c.* 4 Comst. 422; *Commonwealth v. Alger*, 7 Cush. 53, 85; *Gillan v. Hutchinson*, 16 Cal. 156; *Adams v. Palmer*, 51 Me. 494, 495.

⁸ *Bowman v. Middleton*, 1 Bay, 252; *Den v. Singleton*, Martin, N. C. 49; *Quincy*, Rep. 529-530, note and cases cited.

construction of railroads, canals, and like public works.¹ In attempting to define the cases in which a legislature may, by special act, change the ownership of land, or authorize one man to transfer the interest of another in lands, there are certain principles which may be regarded as elementary, which will serve as tests to be applied to the questions as they arise. And, in the first place, the power to do this does not depend upon its being by a general law or special act.² In the next place, wherever the act is based upon the assumption or exercise of judicial power, it is void, since legislatures are prohibited from the exercise of such powers.³ In the next place, a legislative act cannot authorize the property of a citizen to be taken from him through the instrumentality of a sale or otherwise, so long as he is under no legal disability to manage his own affairs, where the effect is, not to convert it to the use of the government, but to transfer it from the original owner to a third person. The cases under this head are numerous, and the proposition can be best illustrated by referring to some of them. The language of Story, J., in *Wilkinson v. Leland*,⁴ is, "we know no case in which a legislative act to transfer the property of A to B, without his consent, has ever been held a constitutional exercise of legislative power, in any State of the Union." Bronson, J., in *Taylor v. Porter*, above cited,⁵ says: "When a man wants the property of another, I mean to say that the legislature cannot help him in making the acquisition." And the language of the court of Ohio, in one case was, "the legislature may cure the title to property, but cannot create it."⁶ In New York, the legislature, by a special act, discontinued an ancient street in a city, and gave the soil

¹ *Buffalo R. R. v. Brainard*, 5 Seld. 100; *Bloodgood v. Mohawk & H. Railroad*, 18 Wend. 9; *Hooker v. N. H. & N. Co.* 14 Conn. 146; *Cushman v. Smith*, 34 Me. 247, where the point is examined how far this can be lawfully exercised before payment or provision for ascertaining and payment of damages shall have been made. See also the cases there collected.

² *Edwards v. Pope*, 3 Scam. 473; *Kibby v. Chitwood*, 4 Mon. 95; *Sohier v. Mass. Gen. Hospital*, 3 Cush. 483.

³ *Edwards v. Pope*, *sup.*; *Lane v. Dorman*, 3 Scam. 238; *Rice v. Parkman*, 16 Mass. 326; *Jones v. Perry*, 10 Yerg. 59.

⁴ 2 Pet. 658; *Heyward v. Mayor*, 3 Seld. 324; *Adams v. Palmer*, 51 Me. 494.

⁵ 4 Hill, 147.

⁶ *Good v. Zercher*, 12 Ohio, 368.

of it to the city. It was held void so far as it undertook to dispose of the soil, as that belonged to private persons.¹ So the court of Pennsylvania took the distinction above alluded to, between the act of the legislature affecting lands whose owner is under a disability, and one where he is not. Thus, in one case, lands had been given to trustees to be held during the life of a son, for his support, and, after his death, to be divided among heirs, and an act of the legislature authorized the sale of this land, and the investing the proceeds to the same uses as the land itself was held; but the reversioners, having been adults at the time of this being done, objected to the sale, and it was held to be void.² So in Massachusetts, where devisees for life sold the land in fee, and the legislature by special act confirmed the title, it was held void as to the reversioners, in depriving them of their estate without their consent, and without compensation made.³ In Illinois, a special act authorizing J. L. to sell the land of a deceased person, and out of the proceeds to pay himself and J. B. a certain sum advanced by them on account of the estate, was held to be unconstitutional and void. 1st. Because the legislature was not a competent body to determine what sum was due, and 2d. Because the sale was not for the benefit of the general creditors of the estate, but for a part only of them.⁴ The case of *Powers v. Bergen*, was in some respects like those above mentioned. In that case there was a special act authorizing executors to sell lands in fee, the use of which was given to certain tenants for life, with a remainder over, and held to be void, as it was authorizing the sale of one man's estate to another, without any agency on the part of the owner, or any reasons given for creating the power. The court say: "If the legislature should pass an act to take private property for a purpose not of a public nature, as if it should provide, through certain forms to be observed, to take the property of one and give or sell it, which is the same thing in principle, to another, the law would be clear-

¹ *Matter of Albany Street*, 11 Wend. 149, 152; *John and Cherry Streets*, 19 Wend. 676.

² *Ervine's Appeal*, 16 Penn. St. 256.

³ *Sohier v. Mass. Gen. Hospital*, 3 Cush. 483, 492.

⁴ *Lane v. Dorman*, 3 Scam. 238.

ly unconstitutional and void.”¹ The cases in which it has been held, that a legislative act may avail in creating a good title to land, seem to be of three classes, and the authority to pass such acts seems to be limited to these. 1st. In confirming a title, where the proceedings or sale, by which it has been attempted to convey land, have proved to be defective or incomplete for informality. 2d. Where the owners of the land to be conveyed, have been under a disability like that of infancy, lunacy, or the like, where the State acts as a kind of *parens patriæ* in taking care of the property of its subjects incapable of managing their own affairs. 3d. Where the sale is made for the purpose of satisfying the debts of a person deceased. Among the cases under the first class, was an act confirming the title to lands, the deed to which was defective in form, by reason of the acknowledgment of the wife not having been properly certified.² But a legislative act cannot make a defective tax title good.³ In another case, where commissioners, in order to make partition of lands, were authorized to sell them, but instead of making deeds to the purchasers, as they should have done, made them to others, who had purchased of the first purchasers, an act confirmatory of the title was held valid.⁴ In another, an executor, under a license of court to sell lands, omitted to publish notice of his petition for leave to sell, and the legislature confirmed the title to lands sold by him, the children of the testator having assented to the sale.⁵ But where the devise was of real estate to a charity, with power in the managers to rent, but not to sell, it was held that the legislature could not empower these managers to sell the land and convert it into money.⁶ The second class is much more comprehensive in the subjects to which it applies, and the law, in respect to them, rests upon the general idea that the State is bound to take care of the interests of its citizens who are incapacitated to act for themselves,

¹ 2 Seld. 358. See also *Chesnut v. Shane's Lessee*, 16 Ohio, 599; *Jackson v. Catlin*, 2 Johns. 263.

² *Watson v. Mercer*, 8 Pet. 88; *Chesnut v. Shane's Lessee*, 16 Ohio, 599; *contra*, *Good v. Zercher*, 12 Ohio, 364; *Adams v. Palmer*, 51 Me. 494.

³ *Conway v. Cable*, 37 Ill. 82, 90.

⁴ *Kearney v. Taylor*, 15 How. 494.

⁵ *Sohier v. Mass. Gen. Hospital*, 3 Cush. 483.

⁶ *Tharp v. Fleming*, 1 Houst. 592.

and, for that purpose, powers adequate are delegated to the legislature.¹ Among the cases illustrative of this is one put in *Sohier v. Massachusetts General Hospital*, above cited, where an act authorized the sale of land of which there was a life estate, with a reversion in persons who could not be ascertained, but were represented by trustees. It was not, in fact, depriving a party of his property, but authorizing a change in its form. So in *Rice v. Parkman*, cited also, the act authorized a father to sell the land of his minor children, and convert the same into money for investment. "This power," say the court, "must rest in the legislature of this Commonwealth, that body being alone competent to act as the general guardian and protector of those who are disabled to act for themselves."² And in *Sohier v. Massachusetts General Hospital*, the court say, it goes upon the necessity of the legislature having the power to authorize the sale of estates of infants, idiots, insane persons, and persons not known or not in being, who cannot act for themselves. In such cases the legislature, as *parens patriæ*, can disentangle and unfetter the estates, by authorizing a sale, taking precaution that the substantial rights of all are protected and secured.³ In *Davison v. Johannot*, the act authorized a guardian of an insane person to sell his land, and the court sustained it, as being the exercise of a proper *tutorial* power in such cases, although one purpose of making the sale was to raise money to pay off an incumbrance upon another part of the ward's estate.⁴ In *Doe v. Douglass*, the act authorized an administrator of an intestate estate to sell the real estate of the deceased, upon such terms as he should deem most advantageous, the proceeds of the sale to be in his hands, to be disposed of according to law, the heirs of the intestate being minor children.⁵ In another case, the act gave a guardian of a minor authority to sell his ward's lands for his maintenance and education.⁶ And in still another,

¹ *Sohier v. Mass. Gen. Hospital*, 3 Cush. 483, 497; *Rice v. Parkman*, 16 Mass. 326; *Davison v. Johannot*, 7 Met. 395; *Estep v. Hutchman*, 14 S. & R. 435, 438; *Clarke v. Van Surley*, 15 Wend. 436, 445; *Powers v. Bergen*, 2 Sald. 358, 366; *Clarke v. Hayes*, 9 Gray, 426.

² 16 Mass. 326, 329. See *Blagge v. Miles*, 1 Story, 426.

³ 3 Cush. 483, 497.

⁴ 7 Met. 395.

⁵ 8 Blackf. 19.

⁶ *Cochran v. Van Surley*, 20 Wend. 365; s. v. 15 Wend. 436, 445.

it authorized a guardian of minors to convey their estate to a particular person to whom their father had bargained it in his lifetime.¹ The doctrine of some of the above cases is controverted by Green, J., in *Jones v. Perry*,² while the Court, in *Rice v. Parkman*, held, that it was no objection to the legislature acting specially upon these cases, that they had delegated a like power to tribunals which were created by a general law.³ The third class of legislative powers in respect to the disposal of private estates by special acts, rests upon the idea that, upon the decease of a debtor leaving property, his creditors have a paramount claim to so much of it as is necessary to satisfy their debts, and that an act of legislation which accomplishes this idea, will be valid, though the form in which it is done may vary from the general law. The leading case upon this part of the subject is that of *Wilkinson v. Leland*, where an executor, appointed in New Hampshire, sold land in Rhode Island, without having the will approved there, for the payment of the debts of the testator. After this the legislature of Rhode Island, by a special act, confirmed the sale. It was held to make a good title, although utterly void until thus confirmed.⁴ In another case, the act authorized one of two administrators to convey the land of the intestate directly to his creditors, they taking the same at twenty-five per cent. discount from the appraised value thereof. The act was permissive, and not compulsory.⁵ In Kentucky, the validity of acts have been sustained, by which the lands of a deceased debtor were sold for the payment of his debts, although the mode of doing it was variant from that required by the general statute upon the subject.⁶ So in Alabama, an act authorizing an administratrix of an intestate debtor, who died there, to sell his lands for the payment of his debts, either by herself or her attorney, was held good, and a sale made by her attorney valid, although she was a resident in Massachusetts.⁷

6. Sales under and by virtue of decrees of courts of chan-

¹ *Estep v. Hutchman*, 14 S. & R. 435.

² 10 Yerg. 59.

³ *Kibby v. Chitwood*, 4 Mon. 95; *Shehan v. Barnett*, 6 Mon. 594.

⁴ 2 Pet. 627.

⁵ *Langdon v. Strong*, 2 Verm. 234.

⁶ *Kibby v. Chitwood*, *sup.*; *Shehan v. Barnett*, *sup.*

⁷ *Watkins v. Holman*, 16 Pet. 59.

cery stand upon somewhat different ground. The subject is treated of, in its practical application, in Mr. Daniell's Chancery Practice. Such sales are usually made through the agency of a master who, ordinarily, is required to make the sale by public auction to the highest bidder, but sometimes is authorized to do it by private contract. But the duty of the master seems to be merely to make the contract. He then reports his proceedings to the court, who, thereupon, require of the parties to execute the proper deeds, the master being a kind of agent to bring about, by means of the court, a conveyance by deed from the vendor to the purchaser.¹ But the powers and duties of courts of chancery, in the matter of making sales in the several States, will be found to be very various. Such are the authorizing of sales of mortgaged estates for purposes of foreclosure,² or to satisfy a vendor's lien,³ the appointment of special trustees to sell the estate of deceased persons for payment of their debts,⁴ and the like, in all which cases, it is believed, courts empower the trustee, commissioner, [*540] or master, as *he may be named, to make the sale and execute the deed, in most, if not all respects in like manner as these are done in making sales by sheriffs or other officers. The deeds, in such case, ought regularly to show the grounds and purposes of sale, and the authority by which the act is done.⁵ But where a trustee was authorized to sell trust property, if he deemed it necessary, and he conveyed it by a deed wherein he was neither named as trustee, nor was there any recital of a sale being deemed necessary, it was held to be a valid and effectual deed.⁶ A sale by a master is a judicial sale, and binds all the parties to the suit who have right or claim.⁷ And where the sale is made under a decree of a court of equity, it is competent for the court to put the purchaser

¹ Daniell, Chanc. Pract. 1447, 1459.

² Kershaw v. Thompson, 4 Johns. Ch. 609; Creighton v. Paine, 2 Ala. 158. See Denning v. Smith, 3 Johns. Ch. 344.

³ Jones v. Froman, 6 Mon. 127.

⁴ Shriver v. Lynn, 2 How. 57, 58.

⁵ Wood v. Mann, 3 Sumn. 318; Tooley v. Kane, 1 Smedes & M. Ch. 518; Atkins v. Kinnan, 20 Wend. 241.

⁶ Hamilton v. Crosby, 32 Conn. 347.

⁷ Sands v. Codwise, 4 Johns. 602.

in possession. Such would be the case where a sale of the premises is made to foreclose a mortgage.¹

7. A decree for a conveyance does not operate as a conveyance.² It has no effect upon the position of the parties in respect to the land, until it has been executed.³ But a deed made to carry out a sale under a decree in chancery, is evidence of title in the grantee, against all the world.⁴ If the deed be not executed within the time limited, it still operates as a conveyance, subject, as between the parties, to have the title revert if the decree is reversed. But if the decree is executed in good faith, a reversal of it will not divest the title of the purchaser.⁵

8. There is another class of sales and conveyances of real estate unknown to the common law, provided for by the statutes of many of the States, whereby a mechanic who does labor, or furnishes materials in erecting buildings on lands, acquires a lien upon the buildings, and the land on which they stand, by virtue of which, upon judicial proceedings had, courts are authorized to cause the same to be sold by an officer duly empowered, who, upon sale made, executes a deed or deeds thereof to the purchaser. Laws of a similar character exist in a majority of the States, but their nature and effect may be illustrated by the statute of a single State. Thus in Massachusetts, the statute provides for filing a statement of the lien which is claimed, in the clerk's office of the town or city, and for commencing a suit for enforcing the same, and for a joinder therein of the several persons having liens on the same building. The court are to ascertain the amount due, and thereupon to order a sale of the property to be made by any officer authorized to serve civil process. The mode of proceeding in making such sale is prescribed and pointed out, and how the proceeds are to be distributed and applied, giving the debtor a right to redeem the estate from such sale within certain limits as to time. It will be perceived, that the lien

¹ *Kershaw v. Thompson*, 4 Johns. Ch. 609; *Schenck v. Conover*, 2 Beasley, 220.

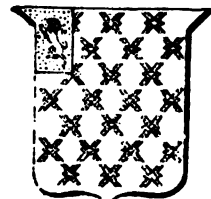
² *Ryder v. Innerarity*, 4 Stew. & P. 14.

³ *Sheppard v. Comm'rs of Ross Co.* 7 Ohio, 271.

⁴ *Mummy v. Johnston*, 3 A. K. Marsh. 220.

⁵ *Taylor v. Boyd*, 3 Ohio, 337.

[568.]



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here spoken of, is itself no title to the land, but merely furnishes the basis for proceedings, under which, by means of a statute power, a title is created in whoever becomes the purchaser of such estate.¹

9. It only remains to notice the sales of land by officers for the payment of taxes, before reaching the main subject of title by grant, or that of conveyances by deed from one individual to another. The subject of Tax Titles has been somewhat prolific in cases and decisions under the various statutes of the several States, in determining which, no aid can be borrowed from the common law, and a work of seven hundred and fifty-two pages on the power to sell lands for the non-payment of taxes, has recently been published by Mr. Blackwell of the Illinois bar. But it can only be briefly treated of in the present work, though the number of decided cases is said to exceed a thousand, and one reason is, that these, from the nature of the case, must be principally local in their bearing and operation. The work of Mr. Blackwell is so exhaustive of the subject, that it has been freely used in the preparation of what is here found collected.

10. The power of taxation is inherent in the very existence of government, like that of eminent domain, whereby the property of the citizen may be taken for public uses. But both are limited, and can only be exercised on the principle of equality and uniformity.² But it is unlike the latter power, since it does not consist in taking the property of one and making him compensation therefor, out of the general property of the body politic, but in taking from each and all the citizens, a proportionate sum for defraying the expenses incident to government.

It is a power always incident to sovereignty, essential [*542] to the maintenance of *government, and operates on all the persons and property belonging to the body politic.³

¹ 2 Kent, Com. 828, 8th ed. note; Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 150; *Clark v. Kingsley*, 8 Allen, 543.

² *Chicago v. Larned*, 34 Ill. 279.

³ Blackw. Tax Titles, 8; *Providence Bank v. Billings*, 4 Pet. 561; *Doe v. Deavors*, 11 Ga. 79; *M'Culloch v. Maryland*, 4 Wheat. 428; *People v. Mayor, &c.* 4 Comst. 422, 424; *Clarke v. Rochester*, 24 Barb. 482, 484, 489; *Moale v. Baltimore*, 5 Md. 314.

11. Nor would this right be restricted in respect to land of which the State itself had granted the title to the party who is taxed, for it has its foundations in society itself, and what shall be the portion which any individual shall contribute to the public burdens, is to be determined by the legislature alone.¹ It is to the statute law alone, that reference must be had for the power of selling lands for the non-payment of taxes assessed upon them, since it is neither a common-law nor civil law remedy or principle.²

12. This power to sell lands for the payment of taxes, is a naked one, not coupled with any interest in the land in the officer who effects it, and, in order that the deed which he executes should give even a *prima facie* evidence of title, unless a different effect is given to it by statute, it is necessary to show, affirmatively, that the prerequisites required by law have been complied with. As the collector has a power to sell only in particular cases described in the act, it must appear that such a case has arisen to authorize the exercise of the power. Indeed, it is required as a condition precedent to passing a good title by such a sale, that all the proceedings of the several officers who have any act to do preliminary to such sale, such as *listing*, and valuation of the land, laying or collecting the tax, advertising and selling the land, the making of proper returns, and the filing or recording of the proceedings, whether the acts are to be performed before or after the sale, must be shown to have been done in strict compliance with the statute authorizing the sale.³ And the proof of the regularity of these several proceedings, devolves upon the [*543] person who claims title under the collector's sale.⁴

13. Consequently, the recitals in a tax deed or deed of an officer, are not evidence against the owner of the property.

¹ *Providence Bank v. Billings*, 4 Pet. 563; *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 37.

² *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 39.

³ *Williams v. Peyton*, 4 Wheat. 78, 79; *Ronkendorff v. Taylor*, 4 Pet. 349; *Morton v. Reeds*, 6 Mo. 64; *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 47, and cases cited; *Thatcher v. Powell*, 6 Wheat. 119; *Alvord v. Collin*, 20 Pick. 418, 421; *Minor v. President of Natchez*, 4 S. & M. 627; *Jackson v. Shepard*, 7 Cow. 88; *Weyand v. Tipton*, 5 S. & R. 332; *Harrington v. Worcester*, 6 Allen, 576; *Abell v. Cross*, 17 Iowa, 176; *Conway v. Cable*, 37 Ill. 88.

⁴ *Ronkendorff v. Taylor*, 4 Pet. 349.

The facts recited must be proved by evidence *aliunde*. Nor is the formal conveyance itself, even *prima facie* evidence that the officers of the law, upon the regularity of whose acts its validity depends, have complied with the requisite forms in their proceedings.¹ To make a good tax title, the one claiming under it must show the authority by which it was granted, and the proceedings of the officer are to be construed strictly. Parol evidence is not admitted to explain a latent ambiguity in the description of the granted premises, or to locate the land, and if the description by the officer be not so certain and complete as not to require the aid of extrinsic evidence, the deed will be inoperative.² This principle of the common law, however, is modified by the statutes of several of the States so far as to give to the deed of a collector the effect of *prima facie* evidence of title.

14. The ground upon which this doctrine rests, seems to be, that the purchaser knows, in the first place, that the one who sells and attempts to convey has no personal interest to part with, that he is a public officer, acting under the provisions and subject to the requirements of a public law, which are known or presumed to be known to the purchaser, and he is therefore put upon his inquiry to ascertain whether these requirements have been complied with, for it is a principle of law that a purchaser is chargeable with notice of all defects apparent upon the face of his muniments of title.³ And, accordingly, it has been held in Ohio, that, in order to have a tax sale and deed received as evidence of title, there must be preliminary evidence submitted to the court, that the land was properly *listed*, taxed, and advertised, and that all other prerequisites were complied with.⁴ And one who relies upon a tax sale, is bound to show not only the existence of an assessment, but its legality also.⁵

¹ Blackw. Tax Titles, 93, 94, 104, and cases cited; *Jackson v. Shepard*, 7 Cow. 28; *Weyand v. Tipton*, 5 S. & R. 332.

² *Wofford v. McKinna*, 23 Tex. 43; *Erwin v. Helme*, 13 S. & R. 151; *Ballance v. Forsyth*, 13 How. 23.

³ Blackw. Tax Titles, 67, 85; *Denning v. Smith*, 3 Johns. Ch. 344.

⁴ *Games v. Stiles*, 14 Pet. 322; *Holt v. Hemphill*, 3 Ohio, 232. See also *Tolman v. Emerson*, 4 Pick. 162.

⁵ *Sutton v. Calhoun*, 14 La. An. 209.

15. How far the party, claiming under such a deed, must go in making out his proof, that is, to what extent of minuteness and accuracy of detail he must show a compliance on the part of the several officers with the requirements of the statute, is spoken of in different terms by different courts. Thus in *Langdon v. Poor*, the judge, in giving the opinion [*544] of the court, says: "It has sometimes been said, that a *literal* compliance with the statute provisions, by all the officers connected with the proceedings, is a condition precedent to the passing of any title. Perhaps the term *literal*, in its confined sense, is rather too strong. A clear and strict compliance has always been held indispensable, even in regard to matters which, but for the statute, could appear to be of no importance."¹ And the language of C. J. Marshall in *Thatcher v. Powell* is: "In summary proceedings, where the court exercises an extraordinary power under a special statute prescribing its course, we think that course ought to be *exactly* observed, and those facts especially, which give jurisdiction, ought to appear, in order to show that its proceedings are *coram judice*."²

16. Indeed, it is uniformly held, that the power of sale does not attach until after every prerequisite of the law has been complied with.³ And the stringency of the law in this respect, as well as the great liability there is, that some step in the process by which alone a title can be gained under a collector's sale for taxes, seems to justify the remark of Sewall, J. in *Colman v. Anderson*: "The title under which the tenant has been permitted to succeed, so far as to obtain a verdict in support of it, is of that kind almost proverbially denominated a *collector's title*;"⁴ or even the declaration ascribed to the Superior Court of New Hampshire: "That a tax collector's deed was, *prima facie*, void."⁵ But still, if all the requirements of the law have been strictly complied with, so as to confer on the of-

¹ *Langdon v. Poor*, 20 Verm. 15. In one case where the statute required the sale to be made *before the court-house door*, and it was made inside of it, it was held void. *Rubey v. Huntsman*, 32 Mo. 501.

² *Thatcher v. Powell*, 6 Wheat. 127. See also *Keene v. Houghton*, 19 Me. 368; *Minor v. President of Natchez*, 4 S. & M. 627.

³ *Minor v. President of Natchez*, 4 S. & M. 627.

⁴ *Colman v. Anderson*, 10 Mass. 105, 111.

⁵ *Minor v. President of Natchez*, 4 S. & M. 628.

ficer a power to sell, and the conveyance be in regular form, it will vest a good title in the purchaser.¹

17. And when the form and effect of such a deed is considered, Blackwell seems to be sustained when he says: "The operative character of the deed depends upon the regularity of the anterior proceedings. The deed is not the title itself, nor even evidence of it. Its recitals bind no one. It creates no estoppel upon the former owner. No presumption [*545] arises from *the mere production of the deed, that the facts upon which it is based had any existence. When it is shown, however, that the ministerial officers of the law have performed every duty which the law imposed upon them and every condition essential to its character, then the deed becomes conclusive evidence of title in the grantee according to its extent and purport."² By a doctrine of the common law, whoever claims a title under a tax deed, must show affirmatively that the requirements of the statute have been, from the first to the last, complied with strictly.³ Nor will a court of chancery reform a tax deed. If it is a title at all, it is *stricti juris*, and depends upon a *strict* compliance with the statute.⁴ And yet possession under such a deed is, as has been before said, under color of title.⁵ Nor will any recitals in such tax deed raise any presumption in favor of such compliance, unless they are made so by some legislative act. "Without such an act, the burden of proof in making out a compliance with the requisitions, is, in all things, upon the claimant. The only exception to this is where the deed is an ancient one, accompanied by a long-continued, uninterrupted possession."⁶ In California and Arkansas, such a deed is *prima facie* evidence of the recitals therein being true, and is made so by statute. But if any essential fact be omitted in such recital, and especially, if the recitals show the omission of an important requirement,

¹ Wofford v. McKinna, 23 Tex. 43; Harding v. Tibbils, 15 Wis. 232.

² Blackw. Tax Titles, 430.

³ Ferris v. Coover, 10 Cal. 589; Lane v. Bommelmann, 21 Ill. 143; Gaylord v. Scarff, 6 Clarke (Iowa), 179; McGahan v. Carr, Ib. 331; Worthing v. Webster, 45 Maine, 270.

⁴ Attes v. Hinckler, 36 Ill. 267.

⁵ Dillingham v. Brown, 38 Ala. 311.

⁶ Worthing v. Webster, *sup.*; Ferris v. Coover, *sup.*; Kelsey v. Abbott, 13 Cal. 609.

the deed will be void.¹ In Michigan and Wisconsin, a collector's deed is by statute to be taken as *prima facie* evidence of the legality of the proceedings up to the date of the deed, and, after two years, is declared to be conclusive evidence of this. But while the first part of the statute is sustained by the courts, the second is held by them to be unconstitutional.²

18. Exceptions to this, where they exist, are created by statute, making such deed *prima facie* evidence of the facts recited, and, in some cases, of a compliance by the officers with the requirements of the law. But even in such cases, with the common law thus modified, if a non-compliance with any substantial prerequisite of the law is shown, all presumptions in favor of the deed are at once overthrown, and the rules of the common law prevail.³

19. The deed must have certain requisites in itself, to be valid as a deed. In the first place, it should come within what is meant as one "of conveyance," which requires it to be in writing, and under the seal of the officer.⁴

20. In the next place, it is not like a patent from government, which requires no formal delivery in order to its taking effect; the deed must, like other deeds, be delivered before it can be operative.⁵

21. It is a principle of law, that, on the execution of a power, the execution must have reference to the power itself, and that a person claiming under the execution, takes under the deed by which the power is created; ⁶ and as it is not by the mere execution and delivery of a deed, but a deed based upon the necessary prerequisite acts by which it became lawful to sell the land which it conveys, that a title can alone be created in the purchaser, it seems to be requisite to the validity of a collector's deed, that it should recite the power under which it is made. And, in practice, it usually goes

¹ *Ferris v. Coover, sup.*; *Kelsey v. Abbott, sup.*; *Pillow v. Roberts*, 13 How. 475.

² *Stewart v. McSweeney*, 14 Wis. 472; *Groesbeck v. Seeley*, 13 Mich. 340; *Wright v. Dunham*, 13 Mich. 414.

³ *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 431.

⁴ *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 432; *Church v. Gilman*, 15 Wend. 658.

⁵ *Blackw. Tax Titles*, 434.

⁶ *Robinson v. Hardcastle*, 2 T. R. 252; *ante*, pp. *304, *320.

[*546] further, and recites the acts of *compliance with the statute which preceded the making of the deed. In some of the States a form of deed is prescribed by statute in such cases, and it is hardly necessary to say, that when such is the case, the form prescribed must be adopted and strictly adhered to.¹ A tax deed in Massachusetts is void, if it omit to recite that the taxes were not paid within fourteen days after being demanded.²

22. The deed must be made to the one who bids off the land at the sale.³

23. In respect to the necessity of recording a collector's deed, there are different rules in different States, dependent upon the statutory provisions upon the subject. In Massachusetts, recording is required ; so in Vermont, while in Illinois a different rule is adopted.⁴

24. If the owner of the land die between the time of the sale and the making and delivery of the deed, it does not affect the sale or impair the validity of the collector's deed afterwards given. But if the deed show upon its face the want of compliance, on the part of the officer, with any of the substantial requisitions of law, as, for instance, that it is made to one who did not bid off the land, it is a nullity.⁵

25. The peculiarity of a tax title, by which the land is always subject to redemption by the original owner, upon paying the tax assessed, with such interest and charges as are prescribed by law, prevails in all the States, though the terms and time of redemption may not be uniform. In some States the deed is not given until after the time of redemption has expired, and during this time the interest of the purchaser is an equity which he can assign and thereby give to his assignee a right to claim the deed from the officer. In others, the deed is made at once, and the estate may then be redeemed by the owner, in which case the title of the purchaser is at an

¹ Blackw. Tax Titles, 434, 436; *Smith v. Hileman*, 1 Scamm. 323; *Atkins v. Kinnan*, 20 Wend. 241, 247.

² *Harrington v. Worcester*, 6 Allen, 576.

³ Blackw. Tax Titles, 444.

⁴ *Allen v. Everts*, 3 Verm. 10; *Tilson v. Thompson*, 10 Pick. 359, 362; Blackw. Tax Titles, 438.

⁵ Blackw. Tax Titles, 449, 450.

end, without any other act done or entry made on the part of the owner.¹ But a deed made to one in possession to whom he tax is set, and who is in duty bound to pay it, would be void; his performing a duty in respect to the estate does not change the title to the same.² And the same rule would apply in all cases where the one paying the tax is under moral or legal obligation to do so. If he suffers the estate to be sold and buys it in, directly or indirectly, he gains no title thereby. But being in possession of an estate, does not, of itself, preclude the right to buy at a tax sale.³

*26. There was, under the colony laws of New Eng- [*547] land, a right in proprietaries to assess taxes upon the common lands, and sell them to enforce payment of such assessments. But it applied only to the lands which were retained by original proprietors, and did not extend to such as had been sold and conveyed to third persons to be held in severalty.⁴

27. In closing these brief sketches of the law relative to the acquisition of title by what has been called an office or official grant, there are one or two considerations to be presented, which apply, substantially, to all these modes which have been enumerated. Where land is conveyed under a special authority, that authority must be strictly pursued, and every purchaser is to be presumed to know that especial authority, where it is derived from an act of the legislature, and if he purchases where that special authority has not been pursued, he purchases at his peril.⁵ Where, therefore, the law required a guardian, upon making sale of land, to make return to the court, and, if approved by the court, it was to be recorded, and should "vest in the purchaser all the interest the ward had in the estate so sold," and a sale was made and deed given, but no return made to or accepted by the court, it was held that nothing passed by such deed.⁶ And this doctrine

¹ Blackw. Tax Titles, 445, 490; *Blight v. Banks*, 6 Mon. 206; *Taylor v. Steele*,

² *A. K. Marsh*, 315; *Cooper v. Brockway*, 8 Watts, 162.

³ *McMinn v. Whelan*, 27 Cal. 319.

⁴ *Moss v. Shear*, 25 Cal. 45; *Piatt v. St. Clair*, 6 Ohio. 227; *Choteau v. Jones*, 11 Ill. 322.

⁵ *Bott v. Perley*, 11 Mass. 169.

⁶ *Deuning v. Smith*, 3 Johns. Ch. 344; Blackw. Tax Titles, 52, 56, 57, 65.

⁷ *Young v. Keogh*, 11 Ill. 642.

extends to all cases of involuntary alienations of lands belonging to persons other than those who make such alienation. Their validity depends upon a strict compliance with all the substantial requirements of the law by which such alienation is made. Such is the case where private property is taken for public use,¹ and where land is taken by levy of execution against the judgment debtor.² So with the sale of land by an administrator to pay debts of the deceased, by order of court. And where the statute required such a deed to "set forth at large" the order of the court directing the sale, a recital merely of the substance of such order was held not [*548] to be a compliance with the act, "and ineffective as a deed."³ And, in case of sales for non-payment of taxes, "to make out a valid title under such sales, great strictness is to be required, and it must appear that the provisions of law preparatory to and authorizing such sales, have been punctiliously complied with."⁴

28. And in establishing a claim to a title by virtue of a sale of or levy upon land under an execution, or of a sale by a guardian or administrator under order of court, or by a master or commissioner under a decree of a court of chancery, not only must the requirements of law have been complied with in all respects, but the judgment and execution, the order or decree, must be produced, unless, as has already been stated, some statute shall obviate the necessity of this, by raising presumptions in favor of the regularity of proceedings, under which a deed, regular in form, shall have been executed and delivered.⁵

29. But if, in the case of a sale by a sheriff, guardian, &c. a judgment and execution, or order or decree, and sale be established, it is not competent to impeach the title by contradicting the deed, made in pursuance of the power thus vested in the officer, by evidence that he did not make it under that

¹ Flatbush Avenue, 1 Barb. 286.

² Metcalf v. Gillet, 5 Conn. 400; Wellington v. Gale, 13 Mass. 483, 488; Morton v. Edwin, 19 Verm. 77; Sargent v. Peirce, 2 Met. 80.

³ Smith v. Hileman, 1 Scamm. 323; Atkins v. Kinnan, 20 Wend. 241.

⁴ Brown v. Veazie, 25 Me. 359; Langdon v. Poor, 20 Verm. 13.

⁵ Hamilton v. Adams, 1 Murph. 161; Jackson v. Roberts, 11 Wend. 425; Minor v. President of Natchez, 4 S. & M. 602; Dunn v. Meriwether, 1 A. K. Marsh. 158;

power, but some other, or that he did not intend to sell a part of what is conveyed.¹

30. And it may be added that, as a general proposition, where a statute requires a ministerial officer, like a sheriff, to make a return of his doings in making a levy, for instance, upon land, such return is conclusive evidence between the creditor and debtor in the execution, and all persons claiming under them respectively.²

Weyand v. Tipton, 5 Serg. & R. 332; *Ware v. Bradford*, 2 Ala. 676; *Bledsoe v. Doe*, 4 How. (Miss.) 25; *Den v. Wheeler*, 11 Ired. 288; *Doe v. Bedford*, 10 Ired. 198.

¹ *Jackson v. Roberts*, 11 Wend. 425; *Snyder v. Snyder*, 6 Binn. 489; *Jackson v. Croy*, 12 Johns. 427; *Jackson v. Vanderheyden*, 17 Johns. 167. See *Minor v. President of Natches*, 4 S. & M. 602; *Ware v. Bradford*, 2 Ala. 676.

² *Bott v. Burnell*, 11 Mass. 163, 165; *Whitaker v. Sumner*, 7 Pick. 551, 555. See *Butts v. Francis*, 4 Conn. 424.

CHAPTER IV.

TITLE BY PRIVATE GRANT.

SECT. 1. General Requisites of Grant by Deed.

SECT. 2. Execution of Deeds.

[*549]

*SECTION I.

GENERAL REQUISITES OF GRANT BY DEED.

1. Origin and modes of alienating estates.
- 1 a. Of parol conveyances enforced in equity.
2. Division of the subject.
3. Transfer of estates governed by *lex loci*.
4. Deed defined.
5. Essentials of a good deed as given by Coke.
6. Must be written on paper or parchment.
7. Must be wholly written before delivery.
8. Effect of erasures and interlineations in a deed.
- 9, 10. Which party is to explain erasures, &c. in a deed.
11. How erasures, &c. should be noted.
12. After title passed, alterations in deeds, of no effect.
13. Who may be parties to a deed.
14. Deeds of *femes covert*.
15. Deeds of persons *non sane*.
16. Deeds by infants.
- 17, 18. American law of conveyances by *femes covert*.
19. Effect of the husband's abjuring the realm.
20. How wife must join with husband in a deed.
21. How far *femes covert* may make an attorney.
22. How the wife may convey to her husband.
23. *Femes covert* not bound by covenants in deeds.
24. Of conveyances by aliens.
25. Effect of duress on deeds.
- 25 a. Of conveyances by one of joint owners.
26. How far names are essential to deeds.
27. Grantor estopped to deny the name he uses.
28. Of the use of Christian names.

[572]

- 29. A deed in the alternative void.
- 30. No person not named can take a present estate.
- 31. Grantee need not be named if ascertained.
- 32, 33. When grantee must be shown to be a person *in esse*.
- *34. Capacity of grantees less restricted than that of grantors. [*550]
- 35. Of mortmain and capacity of corporations to take.

1. **ALTHOUGH**, at the present day, the mode in universal use, by which one individual aliens or conveys his land to another, is by deed, it should not be forgotten that the requirements of a formal instrument in writing, in order to pass title to lands themselves, is as recent as Charles the Second, near seventy years after the first settlement of Virginia. It should be remembered too, as a part of the social and political history of the kingdom, whose subjects settled these Colonies, that for more than two hundred years after the Norman Conquest, the principle of free alienation of lands was ignored by the English law, and was only yielded, at last, to the imperative demands of a freer spirit and growing commerce among the people.*

Under the Saxon rule, lands were, substantially, free in their capacity of alienability, at least such parts of them as were held by charter, called *Boc-lands*, and had been allotted to individual *proprietors, who had not only an [*552] absolute title thereto, but also a purely allodial tenure. In making conveyances of these lands, no technical or set form was requisite, nor was it necessary that it should be done in writing, though it was usual to accompany the transfers of such land by a charter or *land-boc*. Sometimes the conveyance was made by a delivery of possession by symbol. But the symbol or the *boc* was regarded not as the conveyance or transfer, but only as a mode of proof of its having been made.¹

* **NOTE.** — Barrington states that the oldest conveyance of which we have any account, was that of the cave of Macpelah, from the sons of Heth to

¹ Saxon deeds were short and simple. The conveying words were "*do et concedo*," "*dabo*," "*trado*," and the like, either in Latin or Saxon. A consideration was inserted. The premises were briefly described with the particular boundaries of the land. The tenure, whether in perpetuity or for life, &c. then followed. The date was sometimes at the beginning, and sometimes at the end. The Saxon deeds had no wax seals; these were introduced after the Norman conquest. 2 Turner's Ang. Sax. 351, 352; 41 No. Law Mag. & Rev. 156.

These *bocs* were usually deposited for safe-keeping in monasteries, and were the title deeds of the great proprietors, which the conqueror was eager to seize upon and destroy, that all the lands in the kingdom might only be claimed through his own grant.¹ The change in the tenure of lands, and the obstructions interposed in the way of their free alienation under the first Norman kings of England, have been, perhaps, sufficiently referred to in a former part of this work.² And although charters, as evidence of title, had been common, there was no law which required a deed or other written instrument, as a means of conveying lands, prior to the statute of frauds, so called, 29 Charles II., although the statute of *Quia Emptores* had made lands freely alienable, and the statute of uses had done away, substantially, with the form of livery of seisin or feoffment known to the common law.³ The exceptions to this, however, were, first, in respect to the conveyance of interests in land which could not be evidenced and accompanied by formal livery of seisin, because of their being of an incorporeal nature, which, therefore, lay only in grant and not in livery, and always required a deed as a means of transfer;⁴ and, second, the requirements of the act of enrolment, 27 Hen. VIII. ch. 16, which rendered a deed indented and enrolled necessary in order to give effect to a conveyance by bargain and sale. But this did not apply to other deeds which [*553] took their rise under the statute of uses, nor to deeds of feoffment.⁵ The English statute of frauds has been followed, more or less exactly, by the statutes of the several United States, all of which require an instrument in writing in

Abraham. He quotes from Genesis xxiii, and remarks, that it had many unnecessary and redundant words, though the parcels, in a modern conveyance, cannot well be more minutely particularized. "And the field of Ephraim which was in Macpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure unto Abraham." Barrington, Statutes, 4th ed. 175.

¹ 1 Spence, Eq. Jur. 8, 20, 22; 4 Kent, Com. 441, 442; Reeves, Hist. Eng. Law, 8.

² Vol. 1, ch. 2. See Reeves, Hist. Eng. Law, 329, 335, 448.

³ Roberts, Frauds, 270; Browne, Stat. Frauds, 3, 4; Wms. Real Prop. 126.

⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 7, 8; 2 Bl. Com. 317.

⁵ Wms. Real Prop. 150.

order to the conveyance of lands or any instrument therein. And, with the exception of three or four States, a deed under the hand and seal of the grantor is necessary, if the interest to be thereby transferred is a freehold one.¹

1 a. There is a class of cases which ought to be referred to in this connection, where, though no formal deed has been made, such proceedings have been had *in pais* between the parties as to lay the foundation for proceedings in a court of equity to enforce a conveyance by deed. As where, under a contract to convey land, acts have been done by the parties which are deemed to be a *part performance* of the contract, and the court is applied to, to compel a complete specific performance of contract by giving a deed. These remarks, however, are not intended to apply to cases where the purchaser holds a written agreement from the vendor of the estate. Thus, it has been held, that if, under a parol contract to convey, and after part or full payment of the purchase-money is made, the possession of the estate is delivered to and taken by the purchaser, and he enters upon and occupies the estate, it takes it out of the statute of frauds, and the court will decree a specific performance, "if vendor fraudulently withholds a conveyance, or, by so doing, he commits a fraud."² The rule upon this subject, as applied in Pennsylvania, is understood to be this: Payment of the purchase-money is not enough. But if the parol contract be so far executed that it would work a fraud to rescind it, that is, if what has been done under it is incapable of being compensated for at law, an equitable title passes, notwithstanding the statute. There must be a delivery of possession. Thus, a sale by a landlord to his tenant would not be sufficient, nor by one tenant in common to another, because the purchaser is already in possession. Nor is mere taking possession enough, unless followed by such improvements and arrangements as will not reasonably admit of a compensation in damages.³ In all these cases, it is

¹ *Stewart v. Clark*, 13 Met. 79; *Colvin v. Warford*, 20 Md. 396; *Underwood v. Campbell*, 14 N. H. 396.

² *Ryan v. Dox*, 34 N. Y. 312; *Phillips v. Thompson*, 1 Johns. Ch. 131 149; *Wetmore v. White*, 2 Caines' Cas. 87; *Fonbl. Eq.*, Laussat's ed. 150, 151; *Lowry v. Tew*, 3 Barb. Ch. 407; *Parkhurst v. Van Cortland*, 14 Johns. 15, 36, s. c. 1 Johns. Ch. 284, 285.

³ *Hill v. Meyers*, 43 Penn. 170, 172, 173.

apprehended that in order to have a court of equity interpose to compel a conveyance, there must be a definite specific agreement to sell and purchase proved. It must have been followed by acts of the parties which, in their nature, form a part performance of such an agreement. If the vendor refuses to execute on his part, the vendee would be without an adequate remedy in damages by a suit at law, and a failure to perform works a fraud upon the party who seeks performance. There is, in Laussat's note to Fonblanque, a collection of cases upon the point of what amounts to a part performance, and these, with the other cases cited above, it is believed will sustain the other points as here stated.¹

2. In carrying out the plan of this work, it is proposed, first, to consider what constitutes a deed, and what are the requisites necessary to give effect to a deed as a means of conveyance of real property; and, second, what are the several essential parts of such a deed.

3. It may be assumed, as a preliminary maxim, that title to lands can only be acquired or lost according to the laws of the State in which they are situate.² "No man has any vested right to dispose of any property, by whatever title he holds, in any way other than that by which the law prescribes."³ A qualification, more seeming than real to the above propositions, consists in the provisions of the United States revenue laws which require stamps on every "instrument" which any person shall make or sign, declaring that "such instrument not being stamped according to law, shall be deemed invalid and of no effect," and forbidding the recording of any instrument required by law to be stamped, unless the same shall have been stamped accordingly.⁴ And in speaking therefore of the requisites of a good deed or instrument of conveyance, or lease

¹ Fonbl, Eq. Laussat's ed. 152, note B. 1, c. 3, § 8. *Phillips v. Thompson*, 1 Johns. Ch. 131, 149; *Parkhurst v. Van Cortland*, 14 Johns. 36.

² *Clark v. Graham*, 6 Wheat. 577; *Doe v. Nelson*, 3 McLean, 383. By statute in Illinois, a deed good in the State where made, will convey lands in Illinois, and the same is the law in Michigan. *Root v. Brotherson*, 4 McLean, 230; *Butterfield v. Beall*, 3 Ind. 203.

³ *Lies v. De Diablar*, 12 Cal. 330.

⁴ If no actual consideration is paid upon the conveyance of an estate, the stamp to be annexed to the deed is regulated by the value of the estate conveyed. *Grosbeck v. Seeley*, 13 Mich. 345.

of land, the requirement of a proper stamp will be borne in mind, though not specially repeated in treating of these.

4. A deed is defined to be a writing containing a contract sealed and delivered by the party thereto. This is Lord Coke's definition, and does not embrace the *signing* of the instrument which, at common law, was not necessary, as will appear more fully hereafter. In most of the States, however, a signing is required, and in all, it is uniformly practised. But a deed, under all circumstances, implies and requires a seal, and without something answering to a seal according to the law of the State where the land lies, it cannot be a deed.¹

5. In considering the character and qualities of a deed, reference is had to the materials of which it is composed, and the manner of making it, and the requisite forms to be observed to give it validity, and these preliminary to the consideration of its parts, its construction, or its effect. This order is intended to be substantially adopted in the present chapter. Lord Coke considers ten things essential to a valid deed of

*conveyance: *first*, writing; *second*, parchment or paper; [*554] *third*, a person able to contract; *fourth*, a sufficient name; *fifth*, a person able to be contracted with; *sixth*, a sufficient name; *seventh*, a thing to be contracted for; *eighth*, apt words required by law; *ninth*, sealing; *tenth*, delivery.²

6. It will not be necessary to consider each of these requisites in detail. It may be stated, generally, that writers upon the subject, and courts in their opinions, adopt the dogma, that, in order to be a deed, the materials on which its contents are written must be parchment or paper, and the reason given places the rule upon the ground of policy, that writing upon such materials is less likely to be altered, vitiated, or corrupted; though it is not entirely obvious, why a deed written upon cloth of a suitable texture and substance, or the skins of animals properly prepared, though not manufactured into parchment, if susceptible of showing what is written upon them, might not be of equal validity with instruments written on

¹ Co. Lit. 171 b; Wms. Real Prop. 123; Shep. Touch. 50; 1 Wood, Conv. 129; Van Santwood v. Sandford, 12 Johns. 198; Hammond v. Alexander, 1 Bibb, 333; Taylor v. Morton, 5 Dana, 365. See Hutchins v. Byrnes, 9 Gray, 367.

² Co. Lit. 35 b; 1 Wood, Conv. 125; Shep. Touch. 54.

paper or proper parchment. But the rule seems to be otherwise.¹* The law, fortunately, is far from being strict in requiring any great accuracy or precision in respect to what is written, so far as the rules of grammar or orthography are concerned, or as to the chirography or evenness of the page, or the straightness of the lines. False Latin, though it be very bad, will not avoid a deed.²

7. The writing upon the deed must all be completed before the same is consummated by delivery; what is added [*555] afterwards *being of no avail,³ though there are some authorities which sustain the doctrine, that blanks existing at the time of the delivery of a bond under seal, may be filled by an agent, afterwards.⁴

Nor is it easy to reconcile the cases, some of which may be found cited below. Though it would seem to turn in some, if not all of them, upon whether the blanks were filled before or after the *delivery* of the deed. Thus, where a wife signed and sealed a blank deed and handed it to her husband to fill in the name of the grantee, the description and the release of her dower, which he did, and then executed it, and informed her and she assented, but the deed was not present and had been delivered, it was held not to be her deed, though it would have been effectual if she had delivered it after it had been filled up.⁵ And the same court, in another case, held that where a deed

* NOTE. — Chancellor Kent cites from the October No. 1840 of the North American Review, the notice of a deed having been recently discovered by the side of a mummy, in a tomb in Upper Egypt, written upon papyrus, 106 years B. C., in the Greek language, *sealed* by the grantor, and certified to have been *recorded*, conveying land in Thebes, Egypt, and adds, “it is one of the most curious, instructive, and interesting legal documents that has been rescued from the ruins of remote antiquity.” 4 Kent, Com. 462.

¹ Co. Lit. 35 b; 1 Wood, Conv. 126; Shep. Touch. 80, 54; 2 Bl. Com. 297; Warren v. Lynch, 5 Johns. 246.

² Shrewsbury's case, 9 Rep. 48; Shep. Touch. 55; 1 Wood, Conv. 125; Perkins, § 123.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 125; Shep. Touch. 541; Duncan v. Hodges, 4 M'Cord, 239; Perminter v. M'Daniel, 1 Hill (S. C.), 267. See American cases collected in the note to 6 M. & W. 216, Am. ed.; Burns v. Lynde, 6 Allen, 305, fully sustains the text, and is opposed to Texira v. Evans.

⁴ Texira v. Evans, cited 1 Anstr. 228.

⁵ Burns v. Lynde, 6 Allen, 305.

was executed by husband and wife with a blank left for the grantee's name, and the covenants which it contained were qualified, but she, by parol, expressly authorized him to insert the name and strike out the qualification of the covenant, and he did so before he delivered it, which was known to the grantee, but not to her, this avoided the deed as to her. The alteration and filling of the blank, to be effectual, must have been done by some one acting under a power of attorney under seal, or by a delivery by her after these changes had been made.¹ Accordingly, where one signed, sealed, and acknowledged a blank deed, and afterwards inserted the grantee's name, and a description of the premises intended to be granted, and then delivered it, it was held to bind him as a valid deed.² The case of Texira, cited below, was that of a bond which the maker signed, leaving the sum blank, and handed it to an agent to take to the obligee and fill up with the sum he should be willing to loan. This was done, and the bond held good. The court in Iowa examine this case carefully, and hold that a sealed instrument executed and delivered with blanks in the material parts, would be void, though afterwards filled up. But if filled up before delivery, it would be good.³ In a case in New York, a mortgage with the mortgagee's name in blank, was held void even in a *bona fide* holder's hands. But two of the judges thought it might have been filled by parol authority of the maker, and have been valid.⁴ In one case in the Exchequer, it was held that a deed of stock, under seal, with the name of the purchaser in blank, was void, the names having been inserted after delivery, denying Texira v. Evans to be law.⁵ Some of the cases have turned upon the point whether a parol authority by the grantor in a deed, to one to fill material blanks would be sufficient to bind him, though, probably, if this were done before it was delivered, any knowledge

¹ Basford v. Pearson, 9 Allen, 388; Drury v. Foster, 2 Wall. U. S. 24; *ante*, vol. 1, p. *201.

² Conover v. Porter, 14 Ohio, 450.

³ Simms v. Henry, 19 Iowa, 290-296. See also People v. Organ, 27 Ill. 29; Gilbert v. Anthony, 1 Yerg. 69; Wynne v. Governor, Ib. 149.

⁴ Channey v. Arnold, 24 N. Y. 330.

⁵ Hibblewhite v. M'Morine, 6 M. & W. 200; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 1, reaffirmed by Parke, B. in Davidson v. Cooper, 11 M. & W. 794; Perk. § 118; Touch. 54.

or presumed assent on the part of the grantor might give effect to such act of the attorney. The language of the court in *Drury v. Foster*, cited above, seems to favor the notion that if one hand a deed, duly executed, with parol authority to fill blanks, and this is done, he is estopped to deny its validity. Nelson, J., says: "The better opinion at this day is, that the power is sufficient." And the court in Maine say: "It seems to be now settled that where a party executes a deed or bond, and delivers the same to another in an imperfect state, and gives authority to that person to fill up the blanks, and thus perfect the instrument, and he does so, its validity cannot be controverted. This authority may be by parol; it may be implied from the facts proved, when those facts, fairly considered, justify the inference.¹ Without attempting further to reconcile the numerous cases which seem to conflict with each other, and not wishing to occupy unnecessary space by citation of cases in detail, reference is made to the collections of these below.²

8. This rule leads to the inquiry how far alterations, erasures, or interlineations in the writing of a deed, affects its validity. To give the instrument the effect designed by such alterations, this must be made before the delivery of the deed.³ If made afterwards, it either avoids the instrument altogether, or is treated as of no effect. If the contract thereby evidenced, is an executory one, any material alteration made by the holder or a stranger will avoid it, unless done by consent of the maker, or without the knowledge and assent of the holder.⁴ If the alterations be in an unimportant matter, and made by a stranger, it will not affect the instrument.⁵ Thus, where the lessee, after the lessor's death, altered the words "E. Street" to "W. Street," it was held not to be a material alteration, because other parts of the lease showed that the original should have been W. Street.⁶ And a like doctrine was applied to the interlineation of an important clause in one part of a deed,

¹ *Inhabitants, &c. v. Huntress*, 53 Me. 90. See also *Wiley v. Moor*, 17 S. & R. 438; *McDonald v. Eggleston*, 26 Verm. 161, 162.

² 1 U. S. Dig. 433, pl. 10; 6 M. & W., Am. ed. 216, note.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 126; Shep. Touch. 69.

⁴ Shep. Touch. Prest., ed. 69; Com. Dig. Fait, F. 1.

⁵ Shep. Touch. 69; Com. Dig. Fait, F. 1.

⁶ *Jordan v. Stevens*, 51 Me. 78.

from the circumstance that the same clause was found in another part of the deed.¹

9. In these cases, therefore, it becomes exceedingly important to settle, as a rule of law, upon which party lies the burden of proof to determine the character of such alterations. If the law presumes them to have been made before the delivery of the instrument, then any apparent erasure, interlineation, or alteration, does not affect its validity, unless affirmatively shown to have been made after the delivery. Otherwise it would be void, unless the contrary were established. The rules given by the books and laid down by different courts, are singularly diverse and unsatisfactory. Thus, in Wood's Conveyancing, Preston's edition of the Touchstone, and Perkins, it is treated as "greatly suspicious," if the erasure or alteration be material, if it is not proved to have been made before delivery.² Coke *says: "Of ancient time, if the [*556] deed appeared to be rased or interlined in places material, the judges adjudged, *upon their view*, the deed to be void. But of later times, the judges have left that to the jurors to try whether the rasing or interlining were before the delivery."³ While the court in Keble say, an interlineation without anything appearing against it, will be *presumed* to be at the time of the making the deed and not after.⁴ But in Pennsylvania, the court in one case, in the language of McKean, C. J., say: "An interlineation, if made after the execution of a deed, will avoid it, though in an immaterial part, nor is it to be presumed to have been made before,—the presumption is the contrary unless proved."⁵

10. This subject is discussed by Mr. Greenleaf in his work on Evidence, and numerous cases are cited. The cases are also collected in the American edition of Smith's Leading Cases, cited below, to which the reader is referred.⁶ The modern doctrine, however, seems to be, that it would not be competent for the court, upon mere inspection of an instrument,

¹ Gordon v. Sizer, 39 Miss. 818.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 126; Perkins, §§ 125, 128; Shep. Touch. 55.

³ Co. Lit. 225 b; Shep. Touch. 69.

⁴ Trowel v. Castle, 1 Keble, 22.

⁵ Morris v. Vanderen, 1 Dall. 67.

⁶ 1 Greenl, Ev. § 564; 1 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 961, *et seq.*

to declare it void by reason of alterations or erasures apparent upon its face, nor for the jury to do so by mere inspection, and detecting that such alterations have been made, but that is a matter of evidence in which the presumptions are against the party holding and offering the instrument in evidence, and he is to be called on to explain them, as being exceedingly suspicious, especially if the alterations are found to be favorable to him, on inspection of the whole instrument. Though even in this respect, the rule is not uniform, that of the United States court seeming to be more stringent than that of many of the States. Thus, in *United States v. Linn*, the court remark: "But it is said, the law imposes upon the party who claims under the instrument the burden of explaining the alteration. This is the rule, undoubtedly, where the alteration appears on the face of the instrument as an erasure, interlineation, and the [*557] like. In such case, the party *having the possession of the instrument, and claiming under it, ought to be called upon to explain it. It is presumed to have been done while in his possession."¹ But in Massachusetts the court say: "There is no such legal presumption (that the alterations were made before delivery). The burden is on the party offering the instrument to prove the genuineness of the instrument, and that the alterations apparent on the same were honestly and properly made. To what extent he shall be required to introduce evidence will depend upon the peculiar circumstances of each case. There is no presumption of law, either that the alterations and interlineations apparent on the face of the deed were made prior to the execution of the instrument, or that they were made subsequently. That question is to be settled by the jury upon all the evidence in the case."² The

¹ *United States v. Linn*, 1 How. 104; *Galland v. Jackman*, 26 Cal. 85, acc'dt.

² *Ely v. Ely*, 6 Gray, 439, 441. See *Hills v. Barnes*, 11 N. H. 395, rather favoring the rule of the United States Court. *Knight v. Clements*, 8 A. & E. 215, favors the rule in Massachusetts. See also *Clifford v. Parker*, 2 Mann. & G. 909, which seems to incline to that of the United States Court. *Wilde v. Armsby*, 6 Cush. 314, 318; *Wickes v. Caule*, 5 H. & J. 36; *Matthews v. Coalter*, 9 Mo. 705; *Beaman v. Russell*, 20 Verm. 205, go to sustain the rule in Massachusetts. *Jackson v. Osborn*, 2 Wend. 555; *Herrick v. Malin*, 22 Wend. 388; *Waring v. Smyth*, 2 Barb. Ch. 133. See generally 1 Smith, *Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 962, 963; *Norwood v. Fairservice*, Quincy, 189; *Carpenter v. Fairservice*, *Id.* 239; *Dow v. Jewell*, 18 N. H. 356, reaffirming *Hills v. Barnes*.

rule as given by the court of Missouri is perhaps as feasible as any: "As a general rule, if any presumption at all is indulged, the law will presume that the alteration was made before or at least contemporaneous with the signing of the writing, unless peculiar circumstances of suspicion are patent upon its face. And even then, the whole question is one for the jury to settle upon the facts, when and where and with what intent the alteration was made.¹

11. All writers agree that the only safe way in making such erasures or alterations, is by noting them in some way upon the instrument itself, to show they were made before its delivery. The effect of such erasure or alteration is mainly important in respect to deeds which form the basis of an action, in which the authenticity of the instrument is necessary as a part of the legal proof, as where the grantee of land, with covenants, seeks to recover upon the covenants in his deed.²

12. But where, by the making and delivery of the deed, the title passes, being, in effect, an act of conveyance, no subsequent alterations in the deed, or even its cancellation or destruction, will, of itself, defeat or divest the title which has once passed.³ And it is said that if a deed were lost, equity might compel the grantor to give a new one.⁴ And if a deed of an incorporeal hereditament be lost, the grantor may supply the proof by parol evidence. But where one holding a deed of a ground-rent, fraudulently altered or destroyed it, it was held that his claim and title were gone. He could not take advantage of his own

¹ *McCormick v. Fitzmorris*, 39 Mo. 34.

² *Arrison v. Harmstead*, 2 Penn. St. 191; 1 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 960; *Davidson v. Cooper*, 11 M. & W. 800.

³ *Arrison v. Harmstead*, 2 Penn. St. 191; *Miller v. Gilleland*, 19 Penn. St. 119, per *Gibson, J.*; *Davidson v. Cooper*, 11 M. & W. 800; *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 69; *Leech v. Leech*, 2 Rep. in Chanc. 100; Co. Lit. 225 b, note, 136; Com. Dig., Day's ed. *Fait, F.* 2, note; *Hatch v. Hatch*, 9 Mass. 367; *Jackson v. Chase*, 2 Johns. 84; *Bolton v. Carlisle*, 2 H. Bl. 263, 264; *Dana v. Newhall*, 13 Mass. 498; *Nicholson v. Halsey*, 1 Johns. Ch. 417; *Smith v. McGowan*, 3 Barb. 404; *Raynor v. Wilson*, 6 Hill, 469; *Schutt v. Large*, 6 Barb. 373; *Roe v. York*, 6 East, 86; *Miller v. Manwaring*, Cro. Car. 399; *Lewis v. Payn*, 8 Cow. 71; *Fletcher v. Mansur*, 5 Ind. 267, where grantee's Christian name was blank, and after the deed was delivered to him he inserted the name of his wife, it was held to be a void act, and to convey no title to her. Vid. 5 Hurlb. & N. 94, Am. ed. note; *Cheesman v. Whittemore*, 23 Pick. 231; *Rifener v. Bowman*, 53 Penn. St. 318; 1 Greenl. Ev. § 568.

⁴ *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 354.

wrong by introducing secondary evidence of the deed, and, without his deed, there would be no presumption of tenure implying anything like a feudal liability for rent service.¹ In one case, where a deed had been lost before being recorded, the court enjoined the heirs of the grantor, he being dead, from conveying the estate, and passed a decree vesting the title of the estate in the purchaser.²

[*558] *13. The next requisite, in the order of Lord Coke, for a good deed, is a party competent to execute it, and thereby make a grant. There are but few persons who may not make a deed, which, either absolutely or qualifiedly, binds them. Many deeds which, by the early law, would have been deemed void for want of capacity in the maker, are now held to be voidable only, the tendency in modern decisions being to regard a deed, if not absolutely binding, *voidable* rather than *void*. Among those who formerly were held incapable of making a deed, were infants, aliens, married women, and persons of non-sane memory, though, by an absurd rule of law, no man was admitted to stultify himself, and it was left for the heirs only of an insane man to avoid his deed.³

14. It may be laid down now as a general rule, that the deed of a *feme covert*, unless joined by her husband, or unless authorized by statute in respect to her sole property, is void.⁴ And for that reason, if, after becoming discover, she again deliver a deed which she had delivered during coverture, it takes effect only from such second delivery.⁵

15. So a deed made by a person of non-sane mind, who has, for that cause, been placed under guardianship, will be void,⁶

¹ Wallace v. Harmstad, 44 Penn. 492, 503.

² Shaumburg v. Wright, 39 Mo. 125.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 126, 138; Shep. Touch. 56; Den v. Clark, 2 Ired. 23, which states, that the doctrine that a party may not stultify himself is wholly exploded. The law is the same in Tennessee. See Doe v. Dignowitty, 4 S. & M. 57; Dicken v. Johnson, 7 Ga. 484, for the degree of insanity which will avoid a deed.

⁴ Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 56 and note; Zouch v. Parsons, 3 Burr. 1805; Perkins, § 154; 2 Bl. Com. 291, 292; Lefevre v. Murdock, Wright (Ohio), 205; Concord Bank v. Bellis, 10 Cush. 277; Lowell v. Daniels, 2 Gray, 161; Perrine v. Perrine, 3 Stockt. 144 (for the States where this rule is modified, see ante, vol. 1, *279); Cope v. Meeks, 3 Head, 388; Dow v. Jewell, 18 N. H. 355; Baxter v. Bodkin, 25 Ind. 172; Davis v. Andrews, 30 Verm. 681.

⁵ Goodright v. Straphan, Cowp. 201.

⁶ Wait v. Maxwell, 5 Pick. 217. See Pearl v. M'Dowell, 3 J. J. Marsh. 658.

and the same is true of the deed of a person under guardianship for incapacity to manage his affairs, though not in fact insane, even though done with the approbation of his guardian.¹ But the deed of an idiot, or insane person not under guardianship, passes a seisin, and is only regarded as voidable and not void.² And the acts and grants of infants and lunatics are regarded so far analogous to each other, as to be governed by the same rules, and their deeds may be avoided as well against the grantees of their grantees as the grantees themselves.³ It is often very difficult to define what degree of capacity in a grantor is sufficient to enable him to give a valid and effectual deed. The subject is treated of in *Dennett v. Dennett*, where the court say: "The question, then, in all cases where incapacity to contract from defect of mind is alleged, is not whether a person's mind is impaired, nor if he is afflicted by any form of insanity, but whether the powers of his mind have been so far affected by his disease, as to render him incapable of transacting business like that in question." "Weakness of understanding is not, of itself, any objection to the validity of a contract, if the capacity remains to see things in their true relations, and to form correct conclusions." "When it appears that a grantor had not strength of mind and reason to understand the nature and consequences of his act in making a deed, it may be avoided on the ground of insanity."⁴

*16. So, as the law seems to have been settled, since [559] the case of *Zouch v. Parsons*, the deed of an infant, ordinarily, is not void, but merely voidable,⁵ although Mr. Preston, in the *Touchstone*, insists that the decision of that case

¹ *Griswold v. Butler*, 3 Conn. 231.

² 2 Bl. Com. 291; *Wait v. Maxwell*, 5 Pick. 217; *Allis v. Billings*, 6 Met. 415; *Arnold v. Richmond Iron Works*, 1 Gray, 434; *Ingraham v. Baldwin*, 5 Seld. 45; *Breckenridge v. Ormsby*, 1 J. J. Marsh. 245.

³ *Hovey v. Hobson*, 53 Me. 451, 456; *Thompson v. Leach*, 3 Mod. 310; *Myers v. Sanders*, 7 Dana, 524; *Miles v. Lingerian*, 24 Ind. 387.

⁴ *Dennett v. Dennett*, 44 N. H. 538; *Doe v. Prettyman*, 1 Houst. 339.

⁵ *Zouch v. Parsons*, 3 Burr. 1794, 1805; *Perkins*, § 154; 2 Blackst. Comm. 291, 292; *Phillips v. Green*, 3 A. K. Marsh. 11, holding the deed of an infant *feme covert* voidable; *Tucker v. Moreland*, 10 Pet. 58; *Whitney v. Dutch*, 14 Mass. 457, 462; *Boof v. Stafford*, 7 Cow. 180; *Kendall v. Lawrence*, 22 Pick. 540; *Boston Bank v. Chamberlin*, 15 Mass. 220; *Breckenridge v. Ormsby*, 1 J. J. Marsh. 245; *Boof v. Mix*, 17 Wend. 119; nor can he avoid it till he is of age; *quare*, how far silence may be construed to be a ratification of such a deed? See *Dearborn v. Eastman*, 4 N. H.

has not been generally followed, and the statement, in his note to the work, is, "deeds executed by infants are sometimes void and sometimes voidable."¹ The American cases, as a general thing, sustain the doctrine of the case of *Zouch v. Parsons*, and it is held, in several cases at least, that an infant, in order to avoid his deed, must do so within a reasonable time after coming of age."² But deeds, both of infants and *non compos mentes*, may be ratified and established after coming of age or being restored to reason, as the case may be. But the cases are not agreed as to what will, in any given case, amount to such a ratification. Their right of avoiding their deeds stands upon different ground from deeds obtained by fraud. In such cases, if the grantee in a fraudulent deed convey to an innocent purchaser, he holds by a good title, whereas if they avoid their deeds, it defeats the title even in a third person's hands. An insane person or infant need not restore the consideration before suing to recover back lands conveyed by him.³ But an infant cannot avoid a deed made by him, while he remains an infant, nor can any one but himself or his heirs call the deed in question, and a second deed, made during his minority, is no disaffirmance of the first.⁴ What shall be deemed to be a ratification of a deed, after the grantor's disability is removed, is far from being a settled question. Courts have differed irreconcilably in this matter. Thus, it was held to be a ratification that the tenant was suffered to occupy, cultivate, and enjoy the estate for six years.⁵ In another, doing this for nine years was held sufficient.⁶ In another case, an acquiescence for four years, during which large improvements were made upon the premises, without objection, was held to be a ratification.⁷ On the other hand, it was held, in the following cases, that mere silent acqui-

441; *Doe v. Abernathy*, 7 Blackf. 442; *Kline v. Beebe*, 6 Conn. 494; *Wheaton v. East*, 5 Yerg. 41.

¹ *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 7, 56 and notes; *Perkins*, § 12; *Co. Lit.* 380 b.

² 2 Kent, Com. 236; *Wallace v. Lewis*, 4 Harring. 75. See *Babcock v. Bowman*, 8 Ind. 110; *Richardson v. Boright*, 9 Verm. 368.

³ *Hovey v. Hobson*, 53 Me. 453, 457; *Gibson v. Soper*, 6 Gray, 279; *Cresinger v. Welch*, 15 Ohio, 156.

⁴ *Emmons v. Murray*, 16 N. H. 385.

⁵ *Emmons v. Murray*, *sup.*; *Robbins v. Eaton*, 10 N. H. 561.

⁶ *Jackson v. Carpenter*, 11 Johns. 539.

⁷ *Wallace v. Lewis*, 4 Harring. 75. See also *Wheaton v. East*, 5 Yerg. 41.

escence for any length of time short of the period of limitation would not ratify such a deed.¹ Though a deed made under the direct influence of an insane delusion would be invalid as a disposition of property, if, after becoming sane, the grantor were to accept the consideration for which he had made such deed, and this is done intelligently, it would be a ratification of the same.² One mode of disaffirming and avoiding a deed, after the disability of the grantor is removed, is by giving a new deed, and, if the same be recorded, no parol ratification of the first deed, subsequently made, can avail to give it precedence of the second deed.³ In some of the States, the deed of a married woman, if an infant, is void, although she join with her husband in executing it.⁴ In others it is voidable.⁵ And she may avoid it even against the grantee of the grantee named in her deed.⁶ She may disaffirm her grant even while yet an infant, and though her husband refuses to join in such disaffirmance. But her lying by, after coming of age, for ten years, she being still covert, was held not to be an affirmance of her deed, there having been no considerable improvements made upon the land in the mean time.⁷

17. The subject of the power of married women to make deeds deserves a more special notice. As already stated, the deed of a *feme covert* was, by the common law, void. Formerly, in England, she could only convey her lands by levying a fine, as it was called. But, by the statute 3 and 4 Wm. IV. ch. 74, she may now join with her husband in making a deed of her estate, she having acknowledged it to be her free act, after a privy examination before the proper officers.⁸ In this country, wherever the common law prevails, a separate deed by a *feme covert* is void, unless the same be authorized by some

¹ *Hovey v. Hobson*, *sup.* 455; *Cresinger v. Welch*, 15 Ohio, 156.

² *Bond v. Bond*, 7 Allen, 1.

³ *Black v. Hills*, 36 Ill. 379; *Bond v. Bond*, 7 Allen, 1; *Jackson v. Burchin*, 14 Johns. 124; *Tucker v. Moreland*, 10 Peters, 75; *Jackson v. Carpenter*, 11 Johns. 541.

⁴ *Chandler v. McKinney*, 6 Mich. 217; *Adams v. Ross*, 1 Vroom, 513; *Schrader v. Decker*, 9 Penn. St. 14; *Cason v. Hubbard*, 38 Miss. 35. See post 230, as to what is infancy in some States.

⁵ *Greenwood v. Coleman*, 34 Ala. 155.

⁶ *Miles v. Lingerman*, 24 Ind. 387; *Markham v. Merrett*, 7 How. (Miss.) 437.

⁷ *Miles v. Lingerman*, *sup.*

⁸ *Wms. Real Prop.* 188, 189.

statute giving the power.¹ In Maine, a wife may convey her land as if she were unmarried, by virtue of a statute. The same is the law in Minnesota. And in England, it seems, in equity, a married woman has full power of alienation of her estate if held to her sole and separate use, free from control of her husband.² But where the husband made a deed of land in right of his wife, which belonged to her, which was signed by her, and both acknowledged it, it was held not to convey her right. So, if they both join in conveying his right in an estate, it would not carry her separate estate in the premises, even though it contain covenants of title, since she is not bound by these, and is not estopped by them.³ Neither fines nor recoveries as a mode of conveying the interests of married women in real estate, were ever in use in this country.⁴ The tendency of modern legislation in the States has been to clothe married women with a power, more or less qualified, to convey their separate estates as if they were sole. But unless executed according to the forms prescribed by statute, the conveyance is void.⁵ From an early period of her colonial history, it has been customary in Massachusetts, for married women to convey their [*560] lands, or release *their interests in their husband's lands, by joining with them in the execution of a deed in the common and usual form. Nor has it been deemed necessary for the wife to be examined, separate and apart from her husband, when acknowledging the deed, in order to give it validity. This custom is expressly recognized and authorized by a provincial act of the legislature, and is incorporated into, and as a part of, the general statutes.⁶ Whether,

¹ *Lefevre v. Murdock*, Wright, Ohio, 205; *Harris v. Burton*, 4 Harring. 66; *Allen v. Hooper*, 50 Me. 374; *Cope v. Meeks*, 3 Head, 388.

² *Brookings v. White*, 49 Me. 482; Minn. Rev. Stat. ch. 86, § 2; *Hull v. Waterhouse*, 13 Am. L. Reg. 759, 760, and note.

³ *Griffin v. Sheffield*, 38 Miss. 393; *Agricultural Bank v. Rice*, 4 How. (U. S.) 225.

⁴ *Durant v. Ritchie*, 4 Mason, 54; *Jackson v. Gilchrist*, 15 Johns. 115; *Albany Fire Ins. Co. v. Bay*, 4 Comst. 9; *Cope v. Meeks*, *sup.*

⁵ *Morrison v. Wilson*, 13 Cal. 498; *Hepburn v. Dubois*, 12 Pet. 375; *Reaume v. Chambers*, 22 Mo. 36, 54.

⁶ Opinion of Judge Trowbridge, 14 Am. Jur. 76; Prov. Laws, 303; *Mass. Gen*
[581]

as some have supposed, the custom of married women conveying their lands by joining with their husband in a deed, was borrowed from the usage above referred to or not, it has become the universal mode in the several States where the common law prevails, for the conveyance of lands in which the wife is interested.¹ The chief differences that are found between the systems of the different States, consist in matters of form merely, and in the degree of stringency exercised in requiring an acknowledgment of the deed by the wife after a privy examination answering to what was required from her when joining in levying a fine at common law. In the matter, too, of her relinquishing her right of dower to the purchaser of her husband's estate, the law varies somewhat. In New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Minnesota she may do this by a separate deed, executed without her husband being joined.²

18. It would extend this subject disproportionately, to attempt to give in detail the statute provisions and decisions of the several States in relation to it. A few only will be mentioned *by way of illustration. In Massachu- [*561] setts, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Connecticut,³ it is sufficient that the wife acknowledged the deed without any privy or separate examination. But in most of the States, her personal examination, separate and apart from her husband, must be made by a prescribed officer, in order to his certifying her acknowledgment. In Ohio, not only must this be done, but it must appear in the certificate of the magistrate, in order to the deed being valid.⁴ In Kentucky there must be this examination, and the deed must, moreover, be recorded within eight months in order to be effectual.⁵ In North Carolina and Illinois, without this examination and acknowl-

Stat. ch. 108, § 2; *Fowler v. Shearer*, 7 Mass. 14; *Plymouth Col. Laws*, 86. A similar custom prevailed in Pennsylvania, from its first settlement. *Davey v. Turner*, 1 Dall. 11. See *Jackson v. Gilchrist*, 15 Johns. 110; *Lithgow v. Kavanagh*, 9 Mass. 161, 172.

¹ *Gordon v. Haywood*, 2 N. H. 402; 4 Kent, Com. 152, 154.

² *Shepherd v. Howard*, 2 N. H. 507; Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 90, § 8; Minn. Rev. Stat. ch. 86, § 12.

³ 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 19, note; *Lawver v. Slingerland*, 11 Minn. 458.

⁴ Walk. Am. Law, 356. See *Doe v. Fridge*, 3 McLean, 245; *Barton v. Morris*, 5 Ohio, 408.

⁵ *Applegate v. Gracy*, 9 Dana, 214.

edgment, the wife's deed is utterly void.¹ And the certificate, moreover, of the officer taking the acknowledgment, must show that the wife knew the contents of the deed, that she was known to the officer, and that she freely and voluntarily executed it.² In Alabama, she may join title with her husband, or, if his deed is already recorded, she may make a separate deed, which, however, in order to pass her interest, must be acknowledged after a privy examination, of which there is to be a certificate and record.³ In Arkansas, both husband and wife must join, and her examination must be separate.⁴ So in California.⁵ And this can only be shown by the certificate of the officer taking the acknowledgment, which must conform to the statute requirement.⁶ In Delaware, a like rule prevails, except that her deed thus executed, may be valid, though not recorded.⁷ In Florida, a wife may relinquish her dower by a separate deed from that of the husband, upon her making an acknowledgment thereof upon a privy examination, but she must join with him in conveying her own inheritance.⁸ In Illinois, she may, if eighteen years of age, grant her lands or release her dower, by joining in *a deed with [*562] her husband, and acknowledging the same upon a privy examination.⁹ The same is the law in Indiana and Iowa.¹⁰ The law of Virginia requires her to join with her husband, to be privily examined when acknowledging the deed, and her examination to be recorded.¹¹ In Vermont, with similar provisions, it was not requisite to have the deed and certificate

¹ *Askew v. Daniel*, 5 Ired. Eq. 321; *Mariner v. Saunders*, 5 Gilm. 113; *Garrett v. Moss*, 22 Ill. 363.

² *Lyon v. Kain*, 36 Ill. 370.

³ *Thornt. Conv.* 69. See *Dundas v. Hitchcock*, 12 How. 256.

⁴ *Thornt. Conv.* 83; *Elliott v. Pearce*, 20 Ark. 508.

⁵ *Wood*, Dig. Cal. Laws, 100; *Bours v. Zachariah*, 11 Cal. 281, 291. Not only must the acknowledgment be certified by the proper officer and recorded, but after such record, he cannot amend his certificate. It is sufficient if the wife executes the deed in proper form, and the husband assents to the same in writing upon the deed, though he do not join in its execution. *Ingoldeby v. Juan*, 12 Cal. 564.

⁶ *Landers v. Bolton*, 26 Cal. 408.

⁷ *Thornt. Conv.* 118.

⁸ *Thornt. Conv.* 132, 133.

⁹ *Lyon v. Kane*, 36 Ill. 370.

¹⁰ *Thornt. Conv.* 189, 213; *Scott v. Purcell*, 7 Blackf. 66; 1 Ind. Rev. Stat. 264.

¹¹ *Thornt. Conv.* 532, 533.

recorded in order to give effect to it, and now, a separate examination of the wife is not required.¹ It seems that in New York, the deed of a married woman may be good, although her husband do not join with her in making it, if she is examined separate and apart, and acknowledges the same, in analogy to the common-law power in a married woman to levy a fine. This was held by a divided court, in the case of *Albany Fire Ins. Co. v. Bay*, decided in 1850.² An unacknowledged deed of a *feme covert* passes no estate whatever.³

It is not deemed advisable to extend this examination, as, for whatever the reader might desire to know of the precise details of the law of any State upon the subject, he would still find it necessary to recur to statutes and decisions of such State, for a safe or reliable guide.

19. It seems that if a husband abjures the realm, as it is called, that is, remains out of the State, renouncing his connection with his wife, and residing abroad with an intention to *remain and abandon his country, it gives [*563] the wife a capacity to act as a *feme sole* in respect to her own estate.⁴

20. In respect to the form in which the wife must join with her husband in order to pass her estate by deed, it seems to be requisite, that the deed should either contain proper words of grant, or declare the purposes for which she affixes her hand and seal. Thus, a deed signed by a wife with her husband, without mentioning her therein as intending to grant or release anything, was held to be wholly inoperative as to her. The usual recital at the close of the clause in the deed, declaring

¹ Thornt. Conv. 518; 2 Kent, Com. 8th ed. 151, note, citing Verm. Laws, 1851, p. 29.

² *Albany Fire Insurance Co. v. Bay*, 4 Comst. 9; s. c. 4 Barb. 407; Willard, Real Est. 392. See also 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 18, note; 2 Kent, Com. 150-154. The work of Mr. Thornton having been compared with the statutes referred to therein, is cited instead of the statutes themselves, as a matter of convenience to the reader. The reader will also find the rights of married women, in respect to interests in lands owned by them, considered, in a recent and elaborate treatise upon the legal and equitable rights of married women, with an abstract of the statutes of several of the States upon the subject, by Wm. H. Cord, Esq.

³ *Elwood v. Black*, 13 Barb. 50.

⁴ 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 20, and note; *Gregory v. Pierce*, 4 Met. 478; *Abbot v. Bayley*, 6 Pick. 89; *Boyce v. Owens*, 1 Hill (S. C.), 8.

the grantor's purpose in signing the same,—such as “and A B, wife of said grantor, in token of relinquishing her right of dower in the premises,” would, if executed, be a sufficient release of dower, but would not pass her own estate without words of grant on her part.¹ But if the land granted be hers, she must be joined with him in the operative words of the deed,² in which case the grant will be effectual, though the husband be an alien.³ And in New Hampshire and Mississippi, where the deed was of the wife's land, and made in her name, and signed by her as grantor, and was simply executed by the husband by annexing his signature and seal thereto, and acknowledging the same, it was held to be a valid conveyance of her interest.⁴ So under the present Massachusetts statute, a deed by a wife, of her estate, in her name, in the *testimonium* clause only of which the husband joined, and both executed it, was held to be a sufficient joining in the deed to make it effectual.⁵ It is sufficient in Massachusetts, that the husband alone acknowledge the deed.⁶ But in Kentucky, a deed by husband and wife of the wife's estate, is inoperative as to her altogether, unless she shall have acknowledged the same.⁷ In several of the States there are provisions, whereby married [*564] women may convey their *estates where their husbands have deserted them, or are incapable of executing deeds, or have been committed to the State prison.⁸

21. It is laid down, unqualifiedly, in some of the States,

¹ *Stearns v. Swift*, 8 Pick. 532; *Melvin v. Proprs. Locks and Canals*, 16 Pick. 137; *Lufkin v. Curtis*, 13 Mass. 223; *Bruce v. Wood*, 1 Met. 542; *Catlin v. Ware*, 9 Mass. 218; *Learned v. Cutler*, 18 Pick. 9; *Lithgow v. Kavenagh*, 9 Mass. 161; *Frost v. Deering*, 21 Me. 156; *Cox v. Wells*, 7 Blackf. 410; *Purcell v. Goshorn*, 17 Ohio, 105; *Dundas v. Hitchcock*, 12 How. 256; *Raymond v. Holden*, 2 Cush. 264; *Agricultural Bank v. Rice*, 4 How. 225; *Cincinnati v. Newhall*, 7 Ohio, St. 37.

² *Lithgow v. Kavenagh*, 9 Mass. 173; *Purcell v. Goshorn*, 17 Ohio, 105; *Dodge v. Nichols*, 5 Allen, 548; *Bartlett v. Bartlett*, 4 Allen, 440.

³ *Whiting v. Stevens*, 4 Conn. 44; *Agricultural Bank v. Rice*, 4 How. 225.

⁴ *Elliot v. Sleeper*, 2 N. H. 525; *Woodward v. Seaver*, 38 N. H. 29; *Stone v. Montgomery*, 35 Miss. 83. See also *Ingoldsby v. Juan*, 12 Cal. 564; ante, p. *561, n. as to California.

⁵ *Hills v. Bearse*, 9 Allen, 406.

⁶ *Catlin v. Ware*, 9 Mass. 210.

⁷ *McCann v. Edwards*, 6 B. Mon. 208.

⁸ 4 Greenl. Cruise, 19, note.

that a married woman cannot make a valid power of attorney, even jointly with her husband, to make a deed of her interest.¹ But it is difficult to perceive any reason for the rule where she can do the principal thing herself; and such a right is clearly recognized by statute in Massachusetts.² A similar right is also recognized by statute in New York.³ In Delaware, she cannot execute a deed by attorney, although she was privately examined when she made and acknowledged the power.⁴ In Indiana, though the courts hold that she could not acknowledge a deed by attorney, they waive the question whether she can, in connection with her husband, create an attorney with power to convey her land.⁵ In a case in Iowa, upon a similar state of facts, no question was made as to the validity of such a power, and in a case in the United States court from Iowa, the court assume a deed as a valid one which was executed by a *feme covert*, a trustee, by her attorney.⁶ In Wisconsin, she may, by statute, make an attorney, and may even constitute her husband as such.⁷ In Maine, the court seem to assume that she cannot make an attorney, though the case on which the opinion rests does not seem to warrant such a conclusion.⁸ By a recent statute in California, she may make an attorney, if her husband joins in the appointment, but, unless he does, it will be void. But in executing it, it is doubtful if the attorney would have to sign the husband's name as well as the wife's.⁹ But it seems to be well settled, that if a *feme sole* create an attorney and then marry, it will revoke such power.¹⁰ Nor can a *feme covert* join with the attorney of her husband in executing a deed of her land, so as effectually to pass her title to the same.¹¹

¹ *Earle v. Earle*, 1 Spence, 347; *Sumner v. Conant*, 10 Verm. 9; *Kearney v. Macomb*, 1 C. 8 Green (N. Jersey), 189.

² Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 89, § 29. So in New York, *Willard, Real Est.* 269. See *Koch v. Briggs*, 14 Cal. 262. See *Roarty v. Mitchell*, 7 Gray, 243; ante, vol. 1, p. *201.

³ *Willard, Real Est.* 269.

⁴ *Lewis v. Coxe*, 5 Harring. 401.

⁵ *Dawson v. Shirley*, 6 Blackf. 531.

⁶ *Wilkinson v. Getty*, 13 Iowa, 137; *Gridley v. Wynant*, 23 How. 503.

⁷ Rev. Stat. ch. 86; *Weisbrod v. Chicago & N. W. Railroad*, 18 Wis. 41.

⁸ *Allen v. Hooper*, 50 Maine, 373, citing *Whitmore v. Delano*, 6 N. H. 543.

⁹ *Dow v. Gould*, 31 Cal. 646; *Dentzel v. Waldie*, 30 Cal. 145, 150.

¹⁰ *Judson v. Sierra*, 22 Texas, 365, 371; 2 Kent, Com. 645.

¹¹ *Toulmin v. Heidelberg*, 32 Miss. 268.

22. Although a married woman cannot convey directly to her husband, there does not seem to be any difficulty in her doing so by means of a conveyance to his use, if her husband join with her in the deed. Thus, where a husband and wife conveyed the wife's land to J. S. to the use of the husband and wife, their heirs and assigns, and the heirs and assigns of the longest liver of them, it was held to be a good feoffment to their use as joint-tenants, and that the statute would execute the seisin in them accordingly.¹ The wife may also do this by joining with her husband in a deed to a third person, and having a deed from such grantee made to the husband.²

23. And, though perhaps not necessarily a part of the subject under consideration, it may be stated, as a general proposition, that although competent to join with her husband in executing a conveyance of her land, her covenants of warranty and of title, though in the same deed, are not binding upon her.³ But her conveyance operates, nevertheless, to estop her as to the title thereby granted.⁴

24. Aliens, too, are embraced in the Touchstone, in the category of persons who cannot convey lands. But it [*565] seems to be *well-settled, that, even at common law, an alien may purchase and hold land against all the world but the king, and may, with the same limitation, convey the same.⁵ And this disability is wholly removed in many of the States by statute.⁶

25. If one makes a deed under duress of imprisonment, or fear from threats of personal injury, it is a voidable, but not a

¹ *Thatcher v. Omans*, 3 Pick. 521.

² *Meriam v. Harsen*, 2 Barb. Ch. 267; *Jackson v. Stevens*, 16 Johns. 110; *Todd v. Wickliffe*, 18 B. Mon. 866.

³ *Jackson v. Vanderheyden*, 17 Johns. 167; *Grout v. Townsend*, 2 Hill, 554. By statute, she may bind herself by covenants in a deed made jointly with her husband. New Jersey, *Pentz v. Simonson*, 13 N. J. 234. Only bound by way of estoppel in Tennessee. *Fletcher v. Coleman*, 2 Head, 384. *Perkins v. Richardson*, 11 Allen, 539.

⁴ *Doane v. Willcutt*, 5 Gray, 328, 332; *Colcord v. Swan*, 7 Mass. 291. But not as to any title subsequently acquired by her. *Schaffner v. Grutzmacher*, 6 Iowa, 137.

⁵ 2 Bl. Com. 293; *Shep. Touch.* 56; *Burk v. Brown*, 2 Atk. 399; 1 Wood, Cov. 138.

⁶ Ante, vol. 1, pp. *48, *49.

void, instrument.¹ To constitute such a duress as will avoid a deed, there must be an apprehension of the loss of life or limb, or personal liberty. The fear of a battery, or having one's house burned is not sufficient. Mere threatening a lawsuit is no duress.² But in Minnesota, a wife was admitted to show that she signed a deed under threats of her husband that he would abandon her if she did not do it, and would not support her, and thereby she was allowed to avoid her deed. Threats of personal injury would not be requisite.³

25 *a.* There is a qualified disability to convey lands, on the part of joint-tenants and tenants in common, which it is proper to notice in this connection. As each owner, in such a case, is seised of an undivided share of every part, and has, moreover, as an incident to such an ownership, a right to have his own share set out from every other share, by a process of partition, neither owner can convey his interest in any particular part of the common estate, if objected to by his co-tenant, for if he may do so as to one, he may do so to an indefinite number, and thereby compel his co-tenant to become tenant in common of these several parcels, with these several grantees, and to have a separate process of partition with each of these owners, thereby greatly reducing the value of his estate. Such a conveyance of the personal interest of a tenant, however, would be good as to all persons except his co-tenants, and, if not objected to by them, will be valid and effectual to all intents. In some of the States, a different rule prevails, as may be seen by reference to a former part of the work, where the whole subject is treated of.⁴ And in one other respect, such joint-tenant or tenant in common cannot, by his separate deed, affect the joint property belonging to him and his co-tenant, and that is by creating, thereby, a servitude upon the common property, in favor of a

¹ 2 Bl. Com. 291, 292; *Worcester v. Eaton*, 13 Mass. 371; *Deputy v. Stapleford*, 19 Cal. 302; *Fisk v. Stubbs*, 30 Ala. 335, deed of wife set aside, which she executed under threat of husband.

² *Evans v. Gale*, 18 N. H. 401.

³ *Topley v. Topley*, 10 Minn. 460.

⁴ *Ante*, vol. 1, p. 432; *Great Falls Co. v. Worster*, 15 N. H. 449; *Whitton v. Whitton*, 38 N. H. 127; *Smith v. Benson*, 9 Verm. 138; *McKey v. Welch*, 22 Texas, 390; *Porter v. Hill*, 9 Mass. 34; *Blossom v. Brightman*, 21 Pick. 284; *Phillips v. Tador*, 10 Gray, 78.

stranger. A grant to that effect would be void so far as the rights of his co-tenant were concerned.¹ Nor can one of several trustees, in other than charity or public trusts, convey a separate or aliquot part of the estate held in trust. Such deed would be void.² In respect to the right of one of several partners to convey partnership lands by a deed in the name of the company, but executed by himself alone, the common law seems to be clear, that it can only affect his own share and interest in such land, and will not pass the interest of his partners. Nor will any ratification, subsequently made by them, give effect to the deed, unless it be by an instrument of as high a nature as the deed itself.³ But the court of Iowa were inclined to regard a parol ratification in such a case, as giving effect to the deed as to those who thus ratify it.⁴ It is hardly necessary to add, that corporations authorized to hold real estate, are competent to convey the same. But, in so doing, they must conform to the mode pointed out by their charter and by-laws. It must be the act and deed of the corporation as an entity. A deed signed by every individual member of a corporation would not convey the corporate right or title to land.⁵

26. The next requisite of a good deed named is, that it should contain the name of the grantor, and, as it is equally important that it should contain the name of the grantee, these will be considered together.

The object of names being merely to distinguish one person from another, it seems to be sufficient if this is effected, though the true name of the party be not used, or even no name at all. The general principle of law is, *id certum est quod certum reddi potest*, and a man may be described by his office or his relationship to a known person.⁶ A deed to A or his heirs is good, be-

¹ Collins v. Prentice, 15 Conn. 423; Marshall v. Trumbull, 28 Conn. 183; Washb. Easements, 30.

² Chapin v. First Universalist Soc. &c. 8 Gray, 583.

³ Story, Part. §§ 119, 121; Gow, Part 75, 76.

⁴ Haynes v. Seachrest, 13 Iowa, 455.

⁵ Wheelock v. Moulton, 15 Verm. 519; Pratt v. Bacon, 10 Pick. 123; Ang. & Ames, Corp. § 221.

⁶ Broom, Max. 482; 1 Wood, Conv. 160, 164, 171; Co. Lit. 3 a; Perkins, §§ 36, 54, 55; Dr. Ayray's case, 11 Rep. 20, 21; Counden v. Clerke, Hob. 32 a; Sir Moyle Finch's case, 6 Rep. 65; Hoffman v. Porter, 2 Brock. 156, where a deed to P. H. & Son, they being partners, was held good to both; Morse v. Carpenter, 19 Verm.

cause if A is alive, he has no heirs, and if dead, his heirs can be ascertained, *aliunde*.¹ A deed with the name *Edward* written in it as grantor, but signed *Edmond*, and acknowledged in the name of *Edward*, was held to be a good deed of Edward who, at its date, was the owner of the estate.² Where several persons were named as grantors in the deed, and one who was interested in the estate, but not named in the deed, signed it with the others, it was held not to be his deed or to bind him.³ Where an estate is given expressly in trust for some person or corporation, there is the same necessity of inserting the name of the *cestui que trust*, as if the grant was intended to be to him. Thus a grant to A, B, and C, *trustees* of an unincorporated association, was held to be void, there being no such *cestui que trust* known to the law.⁴ But a deed to A, B, and C, as officers of an unincorporated association, conveyed the estate to them. They alone can convey it and the members of the association have no control over it.⁵ And in the following cases a grant to A, B, and C, trustees of a society named, their heirs, &c. was held to be a grant to them individually.⁶ So a deed to the selectmen or overseers of the poor of a town, and their successors, is to them individually.⁷ A deed to L. B. and Company vests the estate in L. B. alone.⁸ But the partner named would, it seems, hold in trust for his co-partner as well as himself.⁹ If the intended grantee be not named, he should be ascertained by description, so as to be distinguished from all others, and any uncertainty, in this respect, will render the grant void. Thus a grant to the inhabitants of a neighborhood which is not defined with certainty and ascertained limits,

613; *contra*, *Arthur v. Weston*, 22 Mo. 378, impugning *Hoffman v. Porter*; *Shaw v. Loud*, 12 Mass. 447; one "to heirs of A B" was held good, he being dead; *Boone v. Moore*, 14 Mo. 420.

¹ *Ready v. Kearsley*, 14 Mich. 225; *Hogan v. Page*, 2 Wall. U. S. 607.

² *Middleton v. Findla*, 25 Cal. 80; *Tustin v. Faught*, 23 Cal. 237.

³ *Peabody v. Hewett*, 52 Me. 50.

⁴ *German Association v. Scholler*, 10 Minn. 331.

⁵ *Austin v. Shaw*, 10 Allen, 552.

⁶ *Towar v. Hale*, 46 Barb. 361; *Den v. Hay*, 1 Zab. 174; *Brown v. Combs*, 5 Dutch. 36.

⁷ *Norton v. Leonard*, 12 Pick. 158; *Newhall v. Wheeler*, 7 Mass. R. 189.

⁸ *Winter v. Stock*, 29 Cal. 411; *Gossett v. Kent*, 19 Ark. 607.

⁹ *Arthur v. Weston*, *sup.*; *Jackson v. Sisson*, 2 Johns. Cas. 321; *Beaman v. Whitney*, 20 Me. 420.

would be void. But if made to the inhabitants of a certain defined district, who are not incorporated, and their successors, the same may create in the then actual residents there, a life estate in the thing granted, but nothing passes to their successors who may thereafter reside there.¹ And where the Christian name of the grantee was left blank in a deed, it was held competent for him to show who was intended by proof *aliunde*, he being in possession of the deed.² In the case before cited of *Morse v. Carpenter*, the deed was to M. & H. who were partners, but their surnames were omitted.³ And this applies also to corporations.⁴ Thus, a grant to a corporation which has never been created or organized, would be void for want of a grantee. It might be different if the defect consisted simply in organizing the corporation.⁵ It is sufficient if the person be described by the character ascribed to him by general repute, though this be not accurate in point of fact. As a grant to the wife of B, where the person intended to be designated lives with him and is generally reputed his wife, though never lawfully married to him. So, the name by which a man is habitually called is sufficient, though different from that of his baptism.⁶ So, calling the party the *senior*, when the *junior* of the same name, or *vice versa*, is intended.⁷ But a deed [*566] to a fictitious person would be simply *void.⁸ A grant by or to a person by a surname only, without something in the deed to show who is intended, would be void for uncertainty.⁹ And it may be laid down as a rule, that a grant to be valid must be to a corporation or some person certain named, who can take by force of the grant, and who can hold either in his own right or as a trustee.¹⁰

27. And if a man execute a deed, calling himself therein a

¹ *Thomas v. Marshfield*, 10 Pick. 367, 368.

² *Fletcher v. Mansur*, 5 Ind. 269.

³ 19 Verm. 615.

⁴ *Dr. Ayray's case*, 11 Rep. 21.

⁵ *Harriman v. Southam*, 16 Ind. 190; *Russell v. Topping*, 5 McLean, 202; *Jones v. Cincinnati Type Foundry*, 14 Ind. 89.

⁶ *Counden v. Clerke*, Hob. 32 a; *Sir Moyle Finch's case*, 6 Rep. 65; 1 Wood, Conv. 160, 161.

⁷ 1 Wood, Conv. 161; *Perkins*, § 37.

⁸ *Muskingum Turnpike v. Ward*, 13 Ohio, 120.

⁹ 1 Wood, Conv. 162; *Shep. Touch.* 53; *Fanshawe's case*, F. Moore, 222.

¹⁰ *Jackson v. Corey*, 8 Johns. 388; *Hornbeck v. Westbrook*, 9 Johns. 74.

certain name, he will not be admitted to take advantage of the fact that it is not his true name.¹

28. The law knows but one Christian name, and the omission of a middle name or its initial, does not affect the execution of a deed.² So it is immaterial that there is a mistake in the Christian name, if the deed explains who is intended. A deed to Robert Bishop of E. will be good, though his real name is Roland.³

29. But, the deed itself must not create the uncertainty as to who is the grantee intended, as, if a grant be made to A B or C D, it would be void as to both.⁴

30. So no person can take, under a deed, where the grant purports to be of a present estate, unless he is named in the deed as a party to it, though a remainder may be limited to one who is not a party to the deed or even a person *in esse*.⁵ And a deed to a person not then living, and his heirs, would be void, since the word "heirs" being a word of *limitation* and not of *purchase*, there is no person to take under it.⁶

31. It was once thought that the grantor should be named as such in the deed. But this does not seem to be necessary if the grantor signs it. Thus, where a deed purported to be that of a married woman, her name only appearing as grantor, but it was signed by her and her husband who acknowledged it, it was held to be a good grant of the husband as well as the wife.⁷

32. There must be a person *in esse* to give as well as to receive a conveyance, in order to make a deed of an immediate estate by or to such person, good.⁸ And if there [*567] is any reasonable doubt of such person being *in esse* at the time of the delivery of the deed, it must be affirma-

¹ Com. Dig. Fait, B. 1.

² Games v. Stiles, 14 Pet. 322; Franklin v. Talmadge, 5 Johns. 84; Dunn v. Games, 1 McLean, 321.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 172; Perkins, § 36.

⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 171.

⁵ Hornbeck v. Westbrook, 9 Johns. 73.

⁶ Hunter v. Watson, 12 Cal. 363.

⁷ Elliot v. Sleeper, 2 N. H. 525; Perkins, § 36; Co. Lit. 6 a; Lord Say and Seal's case, 10 Mod. 46. But see Catlin v. Ware, 9 Mass. 218.

⁸ 1 Wood, Conv. 161, 170; Miller v. Chittenden, 2 Iowa, 368. See also the same case, as to how far grants to charitable uses form exceptions to this rule.

tively shown that he was so in order to give the deed validity.¹

33. This principle does not apply to remainders, provided there is some ascertained person *in esse* to take the immediate particular estate which is to sustain the remainder, till the person who is to take shall come *in esse*. But if the grant, *in præsenti*, be to a person not *in esse*, or not ascertained, and a remainder be limited to another not *in esse*, both will be void.² So a grant *in præsenti* to the oldest son of J. S., who has no son when the deed is delivered, derives no validity from the subsequent birth of a son to J. S.³ So a deed to the heirs of J. S., who is alive, would be void.⁴ Unless there is something in the deed itself which shows that by "the heirs" was meant *the children* of the person named, when the grant may be good. But the court limit this to that of which livery may be made, and do not extend it to incorporeal hereditaments.⁵

34. The capacity to take as grantee is much less restricted than that required to make a grant. Persons *non compotes mentis*, married women, infants, corporations, and bodies politic, may take as grantees.⁶

35. There are, and from an early date have been, statutes in England, called those against mortmain, which prohibit corporations, without special authority, to hold lands. But with the exception of Pennsylvania, it is believed that similar statutes have not been adopted in this country. It is usual, however, to insert a clause in acts creating corporations, limiting the amount of estate which they may hold. But if a corporation exceeds this prescribed amount by an original purchase, nobody but the State can interfere with its holding the property thus acquired. And if its property, by its rise in value, comes to exceed the amount prescribed in its charter, its title will not

¹ Hulick v. Scovil, 4 Ill. 191.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 170, 172; Perkins, § 53.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 170.

⁴ Hall v. Leonard, 1 Pick. 27; Morris v. Stephens, 46 Penn. St. 200.

⁵ Huss v. Stephens, 51 Penn. St. 282. See Lisle v. Gray, 2 Levinz, 223.

⁶ 1 Wood, Conv. 165, 169; Perkins, § 51; Co. Lit. 2 b. 3 b. See Sutton v. Cole, 3 Pick. 332; Concord Bank v. Bellis, 10 Cush. 278; vid. post, p. *583 as to effect of husband dissenting to wife accepting deed, and Doug. 452; Melvin v. Prop. &c. 16 Pick. 167.

thereby be impaired.¹ And if a deed be made to several, as *tenants in common, a part only of whom are [*568] competent to take by the deed, it will be good as to their respective shares to such as are competent, though void as to the others.² A conveyance to "S. L. and Company," would vest the legal title in S. L. individually, but clothed with a trust for the benefit of the partnership of which he is a member.³ The subject of what may be granted, and by what words it shall be done, will be more properly noticed in another part of the chapter, and, so far as the formal parts of a deed are concerned, it only remains to speak of what is necessary to its proper execution. This, as stated by Lord Coke, consists of *sealing* and *delivery*. And this was all that was required by the common law, though it was always deemed desirable that the deed should be signed, and the signature accompanied by the attestation of witnesses, both of which are specially required by the statutes of several of the States.

¹ Kent, Com. 282, 283 ; *Bogardus v. Trinity Church*, 4 Sandf. Ch. 633, where from £30 income per year, the property had grown to \$300,000 per annum.

² Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 71. See *Chamberlain v. Bussey*, 5 Me. 164.

³ *Moreau v. Safferans*, 3 Sneed, 595.

SECTION II.

EXECUTION OF DEEDS.

1. Mode of executing deeds among the Saxons, &c.
2. Signing, unnecessary in deeds at common law.
3. How far signing is necessary in this country.
4. Sealing, indispensable at common law.
5. Affixing a seal makes a deed.
6. Immaterial who affixes the seal.
7. Of sealing and executing deeds by corporations.
- 8, 9. What is a seal by the laws of different States.
- 10, 11. Of witnesses and attestation of deeds.
- 12, 13. Of the execution of deeds by attorney.
14. Public agents may use their own seals.
15. Of the requisite power by which an attorney acts.
16. Of certificate of payment of consideration.
17. Of the reading requisite to make a valid deed.
18. What a grantor is presumed to know of the deed.
19. Of the date of a deed.
- 20, 21. Of the delivery of a deed, — essential to its effect.
- 20 a. What amounts to a delivery of a deed.
22. A second delivery of no effect.
23. Deeds take effect from delivery, irrespective of date.
24. Deeds must have been executed to have their delivery good.
25. What will be the delivery of a deed.
26. Of delivery of a deed by a corporation.
- 27, 28. Of delivering deeds through the agency of others.
- 29, 30. Delivery not effectual till known and assented to by grantee.
31. Delivery presumed from possession by grantee.
32. When grantee must be shown to have been *in esse*.
33. Effect of possession of an executed deed.
- 34, 35. Presumption of intent from an act of delivery.
36. Of successive acts of delivery.
37. Of dissent by husband to delivery made to wife.
- 38, 39. Of accepting delivery by assent to act of others.
40. What is an escrow.
41. Deed never an escrow if delivered to grantee.
42. Deed delivered to a third person, when not an escrow.
43. Form of delivery to make an escrow.
44. Escrow has no effect as a deed till condition performed.
45. Effect of second delivery in case of an escrow.

- 45 a. Effect of rescinding deeds.
- 46. What is equivalent to livery of seisin.
- 46 a. Of the doctrine of relation in deeds.
- 46 b. Of deeds of confirmation.
- 47. Of deeds poll and indentures.
- 48. How far a party can be covenantor without signing deed.
- 49. Of the remedy against a party bound by deed poll.
- 50. Of assigning words in indentures to the several parties.
- 51. Of the enrolment and registration of deeds.
- 52. To what time the date of record refers.
- 53. To whom the record of a deed is notice.
- 54. In what cases a recorded deed is notice.
- 55. Of the time within which a deed must be recorded.
- 56. When a certificate of acknowledgment is necessary.
- 57. In what States record of a deed is evidence of its validity.
- 58. How far knowledge of an unrecorded deed binds third persons.
- 59, 60, 61. Knowledge of a deed equivalent to its being recorded.
- 62. Certificate of acknowledgment, &c. conclusive.
- 63. Of what facts a purchaser's deed is implied notice.
- 64. Of deeds by persons out of seisin of land.
- 65. Deeds void or voidable.
- 66. Fraudulent conveyances.
- 67. Conveyances good in hands of innocent purchasers.

1. Among the Saxons, seals were not in general use; and deeds were simply subscribed with a sign of the cross appended and attested by witnesses. But when the Normans came in, signing was dispensed with, and sealing substituted; though sealing did not come into general use in England, until after the time of Edward III.¹

2. And at common law, signing, as a part of the execution of a deed, is unnecessary, though always advisable.²

3. When the laws and usages of the different States, in this respect, are examined, they will be found to have varied from time to time. Thus the only requisites to a good conveyance of lands in Kentucky, were, formerly, that it should be in writing, sealed and delivered,³ though in another case, signing was *recognized as a part of what constitutes [*569]

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 191, 192; 2 Bl. Com. 309.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 238; *Termes de la Ley*, "Fait"; Com. Dig. Fait, B. 1; Wms. Real Prop. 126; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 56, and note, 60; *contra*, 2 Bl. Com. 306.

³ *Sicard v. Davis*, 6 Pet. 124; *Plummer v. Russell*, 2 Bibb, 174.

a conveyance.¹ But as the statute of frauds in that State requires certain instruments like leases to be signed, and the statutes of 1843 and of 1860 dispense with seals in the conveyance of land, it is presumed signing would now be regarded as indispensable.² So far as this was once doubtful in New Hampshire, it is now made certain by a statute requiring deeds to be signed.³ Signing is essential in Pennsylvania.⁴ And the same is true in Ohio.⁵ By reference to the statutes of the several States, as found in Thornton's Conveyancing, modified in some cases by more recent legislation, it appears that signing is requisite in order to give validity to deeds, in all the States with the exception of Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, where the statutes seem to recognize a common-law execution of a deed as sufficient to convey lands.⁶ Affixing a mark by the grantor against his name, though written by another, is a *signing*, although it do not appear that he could not write his own name.⁷

4. The sealing of deeds was indispensably necessary, at common law, in order to their validity, at least after the time of Edward III.,⁸ and the same is believed to be true in every State, with the exception of Kentucky, Iowa, Alabama, Kansas, and Louisiana.⁹ * By *deeds*, as the word is here used, are inten-

* NOTE. — No seal was requisite under the civil law. Any instrument which contained the names of the parties, a designation or description of the property, the date of the transfer, and the price paid, was sufficient to pass the title. Per *Field, J.*, *Stanley v. Green*, 12 Cal. 166. In Connecticut, it is provided that all deeds, conveyances, and other instruments intending and purporting to be specialties, but which have been executed without seal, shall

¹ *Chiles v. Conley*, 2 Dana, 21.

² *Thornt. Conv.* 223; *Ky. Rev. Stat.* 1860, *Stant. ed.*, ch. 24, § 1, p. 278.

³ *Elliot v. Sleeper*, by *Woodbury, J.*, 2 N. H. 529; *Thornt. Conv.* 364.

⁴ *M'Dill v. M'Dill*, 1 Dall. 64; *Thornt. Conv.* 438.

⁵ *Clark v. Graham*, 6 Wheat. 579.

⁶ See *Mass. Gen. Stat.* ch. 89, §§ 1, 2; *Hutchins v. Byrnes*, 9 Gray, 367; 1 *Rev. Stat. (Ind.)* 257; *Brown's Stat. of Frauds*, appendix; *Isham v. Bennington Iron Co.* 19 *Verm.* 252.

⁷ *Truman v. Lore*, 14 *Ohio St.* 154; *Baker v. Dening*, 8 A. & El. 94.

⁸ 1 *Wood, Conv.* 192.

⁹ *Thornt. Conv.* 205, 224, 242; *Ala. Code*, 1852, § 2198; 1 *Ky. Rev. Stat.* 1860, *Stant. ed.*, ch. 24, § 1; *Shelton v. Armor*, 13 *Ala.* 647; *Pierson v. Armstrong*, 1 *Clarke (Iowa)*, 293; *Simpson v. Mundee*, 3 *Kans.* 172.

ded such as purport to convey a freehold interest.¹ Therefore, calling an instrument a deed, or delivering it as such, or believing *or intending it to be such, will not make [*570] it a deed, without a seal actually affixed thereto.²

5. On the other hand, if there be a seal affixed, it is a deed, though it want the usual recital that the party has set his seal thereto; or, though the recital be that he has thereunto set his hand without mentioning his seal,³ illustrating thereby the maxim, *in traditionibus chartarum non quod dictum sed quod factum est inspicitur*.⁴

6. It is immaterial who affixes the seal, whether a party to the deed, or the scrivener, or a stranger, provided it be done before the deed is delivered. By delivering it as his deed, the maker adopts the seal.⁵ And it is competent for any number of grantors to adopt and make use of one and the same seal, and thereby adopt it as the seal of each.⁶ If a deed be prepared for several to execute, and only a part of them seal it, it will be good as their deed, but will not bind those who do not execute it,⁷ provided it be properly delivered by such as have signed it.

have the same legal effect as though sealed. Stats. 1855, ch. 47, and Stats. 1862, ch. 48, § 2.

¹ Cline v. Black, 4 M'Cord, 431; Blackw. Tax Tit. 432; Jackson v. Wood, 12 Johns. 73; Jackson v. Wendell, Id. 355; McCabe v. Hunter, 7 Mo. 355; Underwood v. Campbell, 14 N. H. 393; 2 Bl. Com. 297; Id. 312; Jackson v. Wood, 12 Johns. 73.

² Warren v. Lynch, 5 Johns. 239; Taylor v. Glaser, 2 Serg. & R. 502; Wadsworth v. Wendell, 5 Johns. Ch. 224; Davis v. Brandon, 1 How. (Miss.) 154; Long v. Long, 1 Mon. 43; Deming v. Bullitt, 1 Blackf. 241; Davis v. Judd, 6 Wis. 85; Alexander v. Polk, 39 Miss. 737.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 192, 238; Shep. Touch. 55; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 2, B. 3; Taylor v. Glaser, 2 Serg. & R. 502; Peters v. Field, Hetl. 75; Bradford v. Randall, 5 Pick. 496; Mill Dam Foundry v. Hovey, 21 Pick. 417, 428.

⁴ State v. Peck, 53 Maine, 299.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 192; Co. Lit. 6 a; Elwell v. Shaw, 16 Mass. 42, 47; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 54, 57.

⁶ 1 Wood, Conv. 192; Perkins, § 134; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 2; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 57; Warren v. Lynch, 5 Johns. 239; Mackay v. Bloodgood, 9 Johns. 285; Bradford v. Randall, 5 Pick. 496; Tasker v. Bartlett, 5 Cush. 359, 364; Lambden v. Sharp, 9 Humphr. 224.

⁷ Shep. Touch. 71; Scott v. Whipple, 5 Me. 336; Colton v. Seavy, 22 Cal. 501; Jackson v. Stanford, 19 Ga. 14.

7. A corporation ordinarily binds itself by its seal, and many if not all corporations are authorized to have and use a common seal. But a deed of a corporation may be good, though sealed with any seal other than their own common seal, if adopted and used by such corporation, and though it be not alleged, in the executing clause of the deed, that it is their common seal.¹ Signing as well as sealing is essential to the validity of a deed by a corporation, though held otherwise by some of the cases in New York, as well as in England.² And, as held by the U. S. Court, not only must such deed be sealed with the corporate seal, but the seal must be placed there by some one duly authorized to affix it. And it is competent to impeach a deed bearing a corporate seal by showing that it was placed there by some person unauthorized to affix it.³

[*571] *8. In respect to what will answer as a seal for a deed, a diversity exists. In some States it is required to be some adhesive substance applied to the material on which the deed is written. In others, a scroll or figure made with a pen upon such material by the one who signs such instrument, is deemed to be a seal. But a seal, such as is known to the common law, is defined to be an impression upon wax, or some tenacious substance capable of being impressed, "whether it be a wafer or any other paste or matter sufficiently tenacious to adhere and receive an impression."⁴ "It is required," according to Lord Coke, "that the deed, charter, or writing must be sealed, that is, have some impression upon the wax; for *sigillum est cera impressa, quia cera sine impressione non est sigillum* and no deed, charter, or writing can have the force of a deed without a seal."⁵ The subject is considered by the

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 192; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 2; Shep. Touch. 57; Mill Dam Foundry v. Hovey, 21 Pick. 417, 428; Ang. & Am. Corp. § 226. See Stebbins v. Merritt, 10 Cush. 27, 34, by which it would seem, that if the corporation have adopted a common seal of a particular character or device, it should be used to make a valid deed. See also, Koehler v. Black River &c. Co. 2 Black (U. S.), 715.

² Isham v. Bennington Iron Co. 19 Verm. 252.

³ Koehler v. Black River &c. Co. 2 Black, 715.

⁴ Warren v. Lynch, 5 Johns. 239; Bradford v. Randall, 5 Pick. 496; Tasker v. Bartlett, 5 Cush. 359, 364.

⁵ 3d Inst. 169.

United States Court in *Pillow v. Roberts*, where it was held, that an impression of a seal on paper would be a good sealing, at least of a public deed.¹ In England, a scroll with a pen does not make a deed, though it does in Jamaica.² In Virginia, it makes a deed, but not in New York;³ though to give a scroll the effect of a seal, the maker must in the instrument itself, declare that he sets his seal thereto,⁴ and a printed L. S. enclosed in brackets in the usual place of a seal, is sufficient in Wisconsin.⁵

9. The scroll is adopted in Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon, Missouri, Ohio, Texas, Illinois, Mississippi, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and perhaps in one or two other States. But in the New England States and New Jersey, the common-law seal is required.⁶

10. In order to establish the fact that a deed has been executed by the party by whom it purports to have been done, it is necessary that there should be witnesses of the fact. It is customary to append to the deed a certificate to that effect, and that the witnesses subscribing the same attested such execution. *At common law this attestation was not [*572] required in order to give validity to the deed,⁷ nor is it necessary in several of the States;⁸ while in others a deed is invalid, unless attested by one or more witnesses, according

¹ *Pillow v. Roberts*, 13 How. 473.

² *Adams v. Kerr*, 1 B. & P. 360.

³ *Warren v. Lynch*, 5 Johns. 239.

⁴ *Cromwell v. Tate*, 7 Leigh, 301; *Ashwell v. Ayres*, 4 Gratt. 283, that it is sufficient if the signer acknowledge it as his deed. But in Mississippi and Florida it is sufficient if "seal" is written within the scroll. *McRaven v. McGuire*, 9 S. & M. 34; *Comerford v. Cobb*, 2 Fla. 418.

⁵ *Williams v. Starr*, 5 Wis. 549.

⁶ 2 Mich. Comp. Laws, 844, ch. 38, § 39; Wis. Rev. Stat. ch. 86, § 239; Maine, Comp. Stat. ch. 35, § 34; Oreg. Stat. 1858, p. 523, § 37; 1 Mo. Rev. Stat. 1855, p. 352; Ohio, Rev. Stat. ch. 102, § 1; Cobb, New Dig. Ga. Stat. 1851, p. 274; Ark. Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 155, § 2; Oldham & White, Dig. Tex. Laws, 1859; Thomps. Dig. Fla. Laws, 348; Ill. Comp. Stat. 1858, p. 240; Miss. Rev. Code, 355; Thornt. Conv. 105, 114, 184, 274, 281, 298, 364, 372, 410, 439, 454, 484; *McRaven v. McGuire*, 9 S. & M. 34. But see *Bates v. B. & N. Y. Cent. R. R.* 10 Allen, 254.

⁷ 1 Wood, Conv. 239; 2 Bl. Com. 307; Com. Dig. Fait, B. 4; *Dole v. Thurlow*, 12 Met. 157, 166; 3 Dane, Abr. 354; *Craig v. Pinson*, Cheves, 273; *Meuley v. Zeigler*, 23 Texas, 88; *Thacher v. Phinney*, 7 Allen, 149.

⁸ *Long v. Ramsey*, 1 Serg. & R. 73; *Ingram v. Hall*, 1 Hayw. 205; *Wiswall v. Ross*, 4 Port. 321; *Dole v. Thurlow*, 12 Met. 157.

to the statute requirements of the State in which the deed is executed or to take effect. In Mississippi and Maryland, one witness is sufficient.¹ In New Hampshire two are required, but a deed without a witness is good against the grantor.² In Kentucky two witnesses are required, but if not attested at all, the deed would be good between the parties.³ Two witnesses are required in Ohio,⁴ Connecticut,⁵ and these must be competent to testify, at the time of attesting the deed,⁶ Vermont and Georgia,⁷ Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana,⁸ South Carolina,⁹ Delaware, Tennessee, and Minnesota.¹⁰ In some of the States there is a necessity of an attestation or an acknowledgment of the deed by the grantor, before a proper officer, in order to its being used as evidence. This is the case in Indiana, New Jersey, Alabama, Illinois, and Arkansas; and in New York there must be an acknowledgment or attestation by at least one witness, to take effect against a purchaser or incumbrancer, and a like rule in Texas.¹¹

11. In order to a sufficient attestation of a deed by a witness, it is not necessary that he should have seen the party write his name. It is enough if the latter asks the witness to subscribe to the attesting clause, and he does so in the [*573] signer's presence.¹² *In thus enumerating the requi-

¹ *Wilkins v. Wells*, 9 S. & M. 325; *Shirley v. Fearn*, 33 Miss. 653; *Code, Maryland*, 1860, p. 133.

² *Stone v. Ashley*, 13 N. H. 38; *Elliot v. Sleeper*, 2 N. H. 529; *French v. French*, 3 N. H. 234; *Kingsley v. Holbrook*, 45 N. H. 320; *Hastings v. Cutler*, 24 N. H. 481; ante, *148.

³ *Fitzhugh v. Croghan*, 2 J. J. Marsh. 429.

⁴ *Clark v. Graham*, 6 Wheat. 577; *Patterson v. Pease*, 5 Ohio, 119; *Shultz v. Moore*, 1 McLean, 520; *Rev. Stat. 1860*, p. 459, ch. 34, § 1; *Richardson v. Bates*, 8 Ohio St. 261.

⁵ *Merwin v. Camp*, 3 Conn. 35; *Coit v. Starkweather*, 8 Conn. 289, 293.

⁶ *Winsted Savings Bank, &c. v. Spencer*, 26 Conn. 195.

⁷ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 295, note; *Verm. Gen. Stat. 1863*, ch. 65, § 18.

⁸ 4 Kent, Com. 457.

⁹ *Craig v. Pinson*, Cheves, 272; *Jones v. Crawford*, McMull. 373.

¹⁰ 4 Kent, Com. 457; *Comp. Stat. 398*; *Chandler v. Kent*, 8 Minn. 525, extending to leases for three years. *Ross v. Worthington*, 11 Minn. 443. But if attested by one, it may be good in equity against a purchaser with notice, *Ib.* 438.

¹¹ *Lalor*, *Real Est.* 238; *Thornt. Conv.* 187; *Id.* 66; *Id.* 161; *Id.* 373; *Cocke v. Brogan*, 5 Ark. 693. But see *Ark. Dig. Stat. 1848*, ch. 37, § 12; *Genter v. Morrison*, 31 Barb. 155; *Menley v. Zeigler*, 23 Tex. 93.

¹² *Parke v. Mears*, 2 B. & P. 217; *Jackson v. Phillips*, 9 Cowen, 113.

sites of an instrument by which a freehold interest in lands may be conveyed, it may be proper to add, that the same requirements have been held essential in conveying a fixture like a shingle-mill securely fixed in a saw-mill belonging to the owner of the freehold, if he sells it without severing it from the freehold.¹ It may be added, that the witnesses to a deed, according to Mr. Barrington, when commenting upon the statute of York, were anciently a necessary part of the jury, which was to try the validity of such an instrument. This statute provides, that if, upon being properly summoned, they do not appear, the jury might proceed without them.² But witnesses to deeds cannot, like those to wills, express opinions of the capacity of the signers. They can only testify to facts, as other witnesses do.³

12. A deed may be executed by the grantor himself, or, as a general rule, he may do it through his agent or attorney. But a power to execute a deed must itself be by an instrument under seal.⁴ In respect to the mode in which this must be done, in order to its creating a deed which is valid and binding upon the principal, much seeming nicety has been observed by the courts. Without citing any considerable number of the multiplied cases in which the question has arisen, it is sufficient to say that the deed, in order to bind the principal, must appear to be clearly his, and must be made in his name. The signing must be expressed to be his act, done by his agent or attorney. Consequently, both the names of the principal and the attorney must, substantially, appear in the execution of the deed, showing not only that the grant and seal were those of the principal, but by whom these acts were done. If the deed be the deed of the attorney,—as, for instance, if by it *he* grants, or *he* sets *his* seal and the like, it is void as to the principal.⁵

¹ Trull v. Fuller, 28 Me. 545. But see Clafin v. Carpenter, 4 Met. 580, as to sale of growing trees, and ante Vol. I. pp. 7-9.

² Barrington, Stat., 4th ed. 175.

³ Dean v. Fuller, 40 Penn. St. 474.

⁴ Livingston v. Peru Iron Co. 9 Wend. 522.

⁵ Fowler v. Shearer, 7 Mass. 14, 19; Clarke v. Courtney, 5 Pet. 319; White v. Cuyler, 6 T. R. 176; Frontin v. Small, 1d. Raym. 1418; Pryor v. Coulter, 1 Bail. 517; Harper v. Hampton, 1 Harr. & J. 709; 3 Am. Jur. 82, *et seq.*, a learned and elaborate article by the late Mr. David Hoffman; Barger v. Miller, 4 Wash. C. C. 280; Elwell v. Shaw, 16 Mass. 42; Shanks v. Lancaster, 5 Gratt. 110; The State v. Jennings, 10 Ark. 428; 1 Amer. Lead. Cas. 577, *et seq.*; Brinley v. Shaw, 2 Cush.

A deed by an attorney after the death of his principal, is void, though the death be not known at the time of executing it.¹*

[*574] *13. A few cases will serve to show the nice distinctions and seeming conflict of opinion which have prevailed at different times upon this subject. In *Wilkes v. Back*,² Grose, J., held, that executing a bond, "M. W. for J. B.," was as binding upon J. B., as if executed "J. B. by M. W." But this is altogether opposed to the doctrine advocated by Mr. Hoffman, in the article above cited. And if it might avail as an execution of a bond, it is very much doubted whether it could if of a deed of conveyance, though in *Jones v. Carter*,³ Judge Roane held, that where a deed was signed B. W., "attorney for R. C.," it was clearly a good execution of the deed. But in *Elwell v. Shaw*, cited above, the deed recited the power of attorney, after which followed "J. S., by virtue of the power aforesaid, hereby grant, &c." In witness whereof I have set the name and seal of"—the principal. It was signed "J. S." with a seal, and was held not to be the deed of the principal. The case of *Barger v. Miller*, above cited, was substantially like that of *Elwell v. Shaw*, in its facts and decisions. In the case of *Harper v. Hampton*, the granting part of the deed was "R. G. H. for and as attorney of J. R., and in pursuance of the above-mentioned power of attorney, hath granted, &c., and it was signed "R. G. H., attorney for J. R." And it was held to be the deed of the attorney and not of the principal.⁴ In the case of *Wood v. Goodridge*, the attorney executed the deed by

* NOTE.—This does not apply to cases where the power of the attorney is coupled with an interest where the power survives the death of the principal, as has heretofore been explained in former parts of this work. See vol. 1, p. *499, and cases cited; vol. 2, p. *324; *Varnum v. Meserve*, 8 Allen, 158.

337; *McDonald v. Bear River, &c. Co.* 13 Cal. 235; *Mussey v. Scott*, 7 Cush. 215; *Brinley v. Mann*, 2 Cush. 337.

¹ *Harper v. Little*, 2 Me. 14; *Stetson v. Patten*, Id. 358; ante, p. *324; *Farris v. Irving*, 28 Cal. 648.

² *Wilkes v. Back*, 2 East, 142.

³ *Jones v. Carter*, 4 Hen. & M. 196.

⁴ *Elwell v. Shaw*, 16 Mass. 42; *Harper v. Hampton*, 1 Harr. & J. 709; *Barger v. Miller*, 4 Wash. C. C. 280; *Echols v. Cheney*, 28 Cal. 160 aced't; *Morrison v. Bowman*, 29 Cal. 352; *Townshend v. Corning*, 23 Wend. 439.

signing the principal's name, but made no mention of its being done by the attorney, and it was held not to be an execution as to the principal.¹ But where the deed itself stated that it was executed by the grantor by his attorney W. M., and was simply signed M. H. (the principal's name), it was held a good execution.² In the case of *Thurman v. Cameron*,³ however, the court held that the attorney must use the name of his principal, *both in the body of the deed and by way [*575] of signature. It would probably be hopeless to attempt to reconcile the various cases which have arisen in the English and American courts upon the execution of deeds by attorney. The reader will find a large number of these collected and commented on by the editors of the *American Leading Cases*.⁴ The leading doctrine running through them, though not always applied alike, seems to be, that to make such a deed valid, the instrument itself must, in terms, show that it is the deed of the principal, that he makes the grants and the covenants, and that the seal is his. The instrument in some part must also show that its execution by the principal was done by the attorney named. If this all appears clearly in any part of the instrument, the precise form or arrangement of the words does not seem to be essential.⁵

14. An exception has practically grown up in New Hampshire, and been in use at times in Massachusetts, in the execution of deeds by towns and other public bodies who act by attorney, it being there held to be sufficient that the deed is signed in behalf of the body represented by the attorney, but in the name and with the seal of the agent, though it seems rather to have been sustained on the ground that *communis error facit jus*.⁶

¹ *Wood v. Goodridge*, 6 Cush. 117.

² *Devinney v. Reynolds*, 1 Watts & S. 328.

³ *Thurman v. Cameron*, 24 Wend. 90.

⁴ 1 *Am. Lead. Cas.* 577, *et seq.*

⁵ See *Doe v. Blacker*, 27 Ga. 418; *Butterfield v. Beall*, 3 Ind. 203. For cases where equity grants relief when a deed has been sealed and delivered by mistake in the name of the attorney instead of the principal, see 1 *Am. Lead. Cas.* 585. See *Wilkinson v. Getty*, 13 Iowa, 157.

⁶ *Cofran v. Cockran*, 5 N. H. 488; *Ward v. Bartholemew*, 6 Pick. 409. See also the case of *Manufacturing Corporation*, in Connecticut. *Magill v. Hinsdale*, 6 Conn. 465; *contra*, in Massachusetts. *Brinley v. Mann*, 2 Cush. 337.

15. The character of the power under which a deed may be executed by an agent for another, depends upon the circumstance whether the act of signing is done in the presence or absence of the principal. If done in his presence, an oral direction to do the act will be sufficient, it being theoretically the act of the principal himself.¹ But if the act is to be done in the absence of the principal, it must be given by an [*576] "instrument under the hand and seal of the principal."²

Nor would a subsequent acknowledgment, that the one acting as such was in fact the grantor's attorney, be sufficient. A power under seal is the only way one can be made an attorney to execute a deed,³ and in many of the States, the instrument must be acknowledged and recorded like the deed itself.⁴

16. It is customary in England, to indorse upon the deed a receipt or certificate of payment of the consideration money, although this is commonly acknowledged in the premises of the deed, and this certificate is attested by witnesses. But this practice does not seem to have been adopted in this country.⁵

17. It may be necessary, in order to make a valid deed, if the party to its execution is unable to read it, and requires this to be done, to read it to him as it is written. But if the party can read, it is not open to him, after executing it, to insist that the terms of the deed were different from what he

¹ Ball v. Dunsterville, 4 T. R. 313; Gardner v. Gardner, 5 Cush. 483; Wood v. Goodridge, 6 Cush. 117, 121; King v. Longnor, 4 B. & Ad. 647; Shep. Touch. 57; Frost v. Deering, 21 Me. 156, where the husband signed the wife's name in her presence and by her direction, which was held sufficient. Burns v. Lynde, 6 Allen, 309, 310; Videau v. Griffin, 21 Cal. 392; Kime v. Brooks 9 Ired. 219; McKay v. Bloodgood, 9 Johns. 285.

² Shep. Touch. 57; Plummer v. Russel, 2 Bibb, 17; Montgomery v. Dorion, 6 N. H. 250; Walk. Am. Law, 365; Stetson v. Patten, 2 Me. 358. Nor will a subsequent parol adoption of the act make it valid. Smith v. Dickenson, 6 Humph. 261; Tappan v. Redfield, 1 Halst. Ch. 399; Rhode v. Louthain, 8 Blackf. 413; Kime v. Brooks, *sup.*

³ Videau v. Griffin, 21 Cal. 389; Hanford v. McNair, 9 Wend. 54.

⁴ Montgomery v. Dorion, 6 N. H. 250. But the deed will be good against the grantor and his heirs, and create a good title against strangers, though the power is not registered. Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 89, § 29; Walk. Am. Law, 365. Acknowledging and recording not necessary in Georgia or Indiana. Doe v. Blacker, 27 Ga. 418; Moore v. Pendleton, 16 Ind. 481. But see Butterfield v. Beall, 3 Ind. 203.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 239.

supposed them to be, when he signed it. Nor could one who is unable to read, be admitted to object that he was misled in signing a deed, unless he had requested to hear it read, and this had not been done, or a false reading had been made to him, or its contents falsely stated.¹

18. A grantor is presumed to have known the contents of the deed he has executed, unless the contrary be affirmatively shown.² And one who executes a deed, cannot avoid it on the ground of ignorance of its legal effect.³ The rule on this subject is thus stated: "A deed cannot be avoided in a court of law except for fraud in its execution, or other fraud or imposition practised upon the grantor in procuring his signature and seal," — a fraud which goes to the question whether the deed ever had any legal existence. The law does not reach the cases of deeds procured by undue influence over the grantor, if he be of legal capacity. The only relief in such cases is in equity.⁴

19. There is usually a date inserted in the deed, as indicating the time when the same was executed and delivered. In indentures, this is commonly at the beginning of the instrument, but in single deeds, or deeds poll, it is generally inserted *at the close. But though a presumption [*577] would arise that the deed was delivered and took effect on the day of its date, if there was nothing offered in evidence to control this, it is always competent to show that the date inserted was not the true date of its delivery. Besides, it is immaterial whether a deed has any date or not, nor would it be affected though the date was an impossible one, like the thirtieth of February. Dates have, however, been in general use since Edward II. and Edward III.⁵

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 237; Shep. Touch. 56; Manser's case, 2 Rep. 3; Henry Pigot's case, 11 Rep. 27 b; Jackson v. Croy, 12 Johns. 429; Hallenback v. Dewitt, 2 Johns. 404; Jackson v. Hayner, 12 Johns. 469; Taylor v. King, 6 Munf. 358; Com. Dig. Fait, B. 2; Souverbye v. Arden, 1 Johns. Ch. 252; Withington v. Warren, 10 Met. 434.

² Kimball v. Eaton, 8 N. H. 391.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 238; 2 Rep. 3.

⁴ Truman v. Lore, 14 Ohio St. 155; Hartshorn v. Day, 19 How. 223.

⁵ Co. Lit. 6 a; Perkins, § 145; Goddard's case, 2 Rep. 4 b; Com. Dig. Fait. B. J; Shep. Touch. 52, 55, 58; Jackson v. Schoonmaker, 2 Johns. 234; Colquhoun v. Atkinson, 6 Munf. 550; Lee v. Mass. Ins. Co. 6 Mass. 208, 219; M'Kinney v.

20. Passing over, for the present, the provisions in most of the States for acknowledging deeds before certain prescribed officers, it remains to speak of that ceremony indispensable to their validity, though all the other requisites have been complied with, namely, delivery. In this respect all courts and writers agree. But in applying the doctrine, they are not uniform in defining what constitutes such a delivery. That a delivery is essential to give effect to a deed, authorities might be multiplied indefinitely. Those cited below will be sufficient.¹ A delivery of a deed is as essential to the passing of an estate as the signing, and so long as the grantor retains the legal control of the instrument, the title cannot pass any more than if he had not signed the deed.²

20 *a*. Delivery being so essential to the giving effect to a deed, it becomes important to define, so far as can be by the language and rulings of courts, what amounts to such delivery under the various circumstances of the different cases. In the first place, the grantor must give up control or dominion over the deed, and, in the second place, the grantee must actually or by implication have accepted the deed as his own, and the estate conveyed by it. Thus a delivery of a deed after the grantor's death is of no effect.³ A, being indebted to B, agreed to secure him by a deed of his land. He made a deed unknown to B, and had it recorded, and B died without any knowledge of its being made, and it was held not to be a sufficient acceptance to make it good.⁴ A deed voluntarily placed in the grantee's hands is never an escrow.⁵ Where the grantor made a

Rhoades, 5 Watts, 343; *McConnell v. Brown*, Litt. Sel. Cas. 459; 1 Wood, Conv. 195; *Geiss v. Odenheimer*, 4 Yeates, 278; *Osbourne v. Rider*, Cro. Jac. 135; *Thompson v. Thompson*, 9 Ind. 833; *Genter v. Morrison*, 31 Barb. 155; *Banning v. Edes*, 6 Minn. 402; *Swan v. Hodges*, 3 Head, 254.

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 193; *Shep. Touch.* 57; *Co. Lit.* 35 b; *Goddard's case*, 2 Rep. 4 b; *Com. Dig. Fait*, A. 3; *Hulick v. Scovil*, 4 Gilm. 175; *Church v. Gilman*, 15 Wend. 656, 658; *Fairbanks v. Metcalf*, 8 Mass. 230, 239; *Stiles v. Brown*, 16 Verm. 563; *Fletcher v. Mansur*, 5 Ind. 267.

² *Cook v. Brown*, 34 N. H. 476; *Johnson v. Farley*, 45 N. H. 510; *Overman v. Kerr*, 17 Iowa, 486, 490.

³ *Jackson v. Leek*, 12 Wend. 107; *Fay v. Richardson*, 7 Pick. 91; *Post*, pl. 30.

⁴ *Jackson v. Phipps*, 12 Johns. 421; *Woodbury v. Fisher*, 20 Ind. 388.

⁵ *People v. Bostwick*, 32 N. Y. 445, 454; *Broman v. Bingham*, 26 N. Y. 483.

deed, which the grantee saw, and the grantor agreed to put it on record, and did so, but in the absence of the grantee, and without any formal delivery to him, it was held to be a good delivery, the register being by such assent constituted the agent to accept the delivery.¹ The deed must pass under the power of the grantee, or some one for his use, with the grantor's consent.² If after a deed is put on record for the grantee, he assents to or ratifies the act, it becomes a good delivery. But any lien or attachment laid upon the land or the property of the grantor, before such assent, would hold.³ Many of the cases hold, that a delivery of a deed to a stranger passes the title, upon the ground that the law presumes an assent and acceptance on the part of the grantee. But the same cases hold that if the grantee does dissent, the title does not pass.⁴ And some of the cases hold that, in such a case, until the deed is accepted, if it be not an escrow the grantor may resume it, and thus prevent its taking effect at all.⁵ The assent by the cashier of a bank to a deed made to the bank is sufficient.⁶ If these various rulings of the courts can be reconciled, it still seems to leave the title to the estate in an anomalous condition, between the depositing of the deed with the stranger and its acceptance by the grantee. The presumption of acceptance which, it is said, the law raises in such cases, is merely evidence of delivery, at best, and whether it can ever be fairly raised as a rule of law, except in case of infant grantees, and such as are under disabilities to assent, may perhaps be gravely questioned, after the language of Abbot, C. J., in *Townson v. Tickell*. "The law is not so absurd as to force a man to take an estate against his will." He refers to the case above cited from *Ventris*, and says: "Three of the judges there held that an estate did not pass by surrender to the surrenderee, till he expressly accepted it. Mr Justice Ventris differed, and

¹ *Cooper v. Jackson*, 4 Wis. 549, 553.

² *Somers v. Pumphrey*, 24 Ind. 240; *Dearmond v. Dearmond*, 10 Ind. 191; *Wilson v. Cassidy*, 2 Ind. 562.

³ *Parmelee v. Simpson*, 5 Wall. U. S. 81; *Jackson v. Cleveland*, 15 Mich. 101; *Elmore v. Marks*, 39 Verm. 538, 542.

⁴ *Peavey v. Tilton*, 18 N. H. 152; *Tompkins v. Wheeler*, 16 Peters, 119; *Thompson v. Leach*, 2 Vent. 198.

⁵ *Johnson v. Farley*, 45 N. H. 509; *Derry Bank v. Webster*, 44 N. H. 268.

⁶ *Farmer's, &c. Bank v. Drury*, 38 Verm. 431.

held that it passed immediately, liable to be *divested* by the dissent of the surrenderee. His judgment is, however, wholly founded on this: that a party to whom an estate is given, must be taken to give an implied assent to that which is for his benefit, till the contrary appears." And Best, J., in the same case says: "It seems to be contrary to common sense, to say that an estate should *vest* in a man not assenting to it." And though the case was one of devise, the same reasoning would apply with stronger force *inter vivos*, in respect to deeds.¹ But a deed may be delivered without an actual manucaption by the grantee or his agent. Thus a wife wishing to convey her land to her husband through a third person, joined with him in making a deed, which was left upon their table till the next morning, when the grantee came, and executed a deed to the husband, who took both deeds and put them on record, and it was held to be a good delivery.² And if once delivered, the validity and effect of the act will not be impaired by the deed being taken and retained by the grantor.³

21. And if once delivered, it cannot, if valid, be defeated by any subsequent act, unless it be by virtue of some condition contained in the deed itself.⁴

22. Regularly, therefore, there can be but one delivery of the same deed, for if the first is effectual, the second cannot be of any avail. This principle is applicable in cases where infants, *femes covert*, and the like, have undertaken to give validity to a deed which has once been delivered, by delivering it a second time. And the result is, that where

[*578] it is merely *voidable, as in the case of an infant, or person of non-sane memory; a second delivery after his disability has been removed, would be simply void. Whereas, a delivery by a *feme covert* being void, if she makes a second one on becoming *discover*, it will be good, and give effect to

¹ Townson v. Tickell, 3 B. & Ald. 36. See Younge v. Guilbeau, 3 Wall, U. S. 641; Dikes v. Miller, 24 Tex. 423; Fonda v. Sage, 46 Barb. 109.

² Somers v. Pumphrey, 24 Ind. 240; Folly v. Vantuyt, 4 Halst. 153. See also Shelton's case, Cro. Eliz. 7.

³ Souverbye v. Arden, 1 Johns. Ch. 255; Shelton's case, Cro. Eliz. 7; Connelly v. Doe, 8 Blackf. 320; Somers v. Pumphrey, 24 Ind. 240.

⁴ Hawksland v. Gatchel, Cro. Eliz. 835; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 36. See 1 Wood, Conv. 194; Younge v. Moore, 1 Strobb. 48.

her deed.¹ Where husband and wife joined in a deed of wife's land, but the deed was not delivered until after her death, though the deed thereby passed the interest of the husband, it did not that of the wife, since the deed never took effect in her lifetime.²

23. A deed takes effect from its delivery, irrespective of its date, though *prima facie* the date is to be taken at the time of delivery.³ But if the date of the acknowledgment is subsequent to the date of the deed, the law does not presume a delivery prior to the acknowledgment.⁴

24. But, to have the effect of a delivery, the deed must first have been executed completely; no delivery before that can give force to the deed.⁵

25. In undertaking to define what will constitute a delivery of a deed, it is said that it may either be "actual, that is, by doing something and saying nothing, or verbal, that is, by saying something and doing nothing, or it may be by both." But it must be by something answering to the one or the other, or both these, and with an intent thereby to give effect to the deed.⁶ Among the illustrations given, of what would amount to a delivery by the mode above stated, is that of a deed lying upon a table in presence of the parties, and the grantor tells the grantee to take it and he does so. Here the delivery takes place by words alone, on the part of the maker. If, on the other hand, the grantor throws the deed upon the

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 196; Com. Dig. Fait, B. 5; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 60, and note; 2 Rolle, Abr. Fait, N. 1; Verplank v. Sterry, 12 Johns. 536, 548; Mills v. Gore, 20 Pick. 28, 36; Perkins, § 154.

² Shoenberger v. Zook, 34 Penn. St. 24.

³ Harrison v. Phillips Academy, 12 Mass. 455, 460; Jackson v. Bard, 4 Johns. 230; Geiss v. Odenheimer, 4 Yeates, 278; 1 Wood, Conv. 195; Goddard's case, 2 Rep. 4 b; Shep. Touch. 58, 72; Colquhoun v. Atkinson, 6 Munf. 515; M'Connell v. Brown, Lit. Sel. Cas. 462; Com. Dig. Fait, G.; Cutts v. York Co. 18 Me. 190. But see Elsey v. Metcalf, 1 Denio, 323; Smith v. Porter, 10 Gray, 67.

⁴ Blanchard v. Tyler, 12 Mich. 339.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 194; Shep. Touch. 58; M'Kee v. Hicks, 2 Dev. 379; Burns v. Lynde, 6 Allen, 305.

⁶ Com. Dig. Fait, A. 3, A. 4; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 58, n.; 1 Wood, Conv. 193; Co. Lit., Day's ed. 36 a, and note, 223; 2 Rolle, Abr. Fait, K.; Verplank v. Sterry, 12 Johns. 536; Mills v. Gore, 20 Pick. 28, 36; Hughes v. Easten, 4 J. J. Marsh. 572; Methodist Church v. Jaques, 1 Johns. Ch. 450; Dearmond v. Dearmond, 10 Ind. 191; Berry v. Anderson, 22 Ind. 39.

table, intending the other party to take it, and he does so, it will be a delivery, though nothing is said. If, however, the deed is laid upon the table without any such intention, [*579] and the grantee *takes it up, it will not amount to a delivery.¹ If, therefore, one to whom a deed is made, gets possession of it, without something answering to a delivery on the part of the maker, it will not avail him nor affect the title of the maker.² Thus where the grantee, after the formal execution of the deed by the grantor, took the same in the grantor's presence, without any objection on his part, it was held to be a good delivery.³ So, though the grantor deliver the deed in consequence of false and fraudulent pretences, if it be delivered, and grantee conveys to an innocent third party, it passes a good title.⁴ If delivered, the deed takes effect, though both parties, under a mistake of law, understood it would not be effectual as a delivery until put on record.⁵

26. Ordinarily, nothing further is required to constitute a delivery of a deed, on the part of a corporation, than that their common seal should be put to it by the consent of the corporation, unless, when executing it, they appoint an attorney to deliver it. In that case it does not become their deed until its formal delivery.⁶ A delivery of a deed to the authorized agent of a corporation, is a delivery to the corporation.⁷

27. There is commonly much less difficulty in determining whether, in any given case, there has been a delivery of a deed where the transaction is directly between the parties to the instrument, than where it is delivered through the agency of third persons; for the delivery may be made by or through other

¹ Com. Dig. Fait, A. 3; *Mills v. Gore*, 20 Pick. 28, 36; *Chamberlain v. Staunton*, 1 Leon. 140; 1 Wood, Conv. 193, 195; *Methodist Church v. Jaques*, 1 Johns. Ch. 456; *Shep. Touch.* 58; *Thoroughgood's case*, 9 Rep. 136; *Co. Lit.* 36 a, 49 b.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 193; *Cutts v. York Co.* 18 Me. 190; *Black v. Lamb*, 1 Bessley (N. J.), 108, 116; *Roberts v. Jackson*, 1 Wend. 478; *Hadlock v. Hadlock*, 22 Ill. 388.

³ *Williams v. Sullivan*, 10 Rich. Eq. 217; *Stewart v. Weed*, 11 Ind. 94.

⁴ *Berry v. Anderson*, 22 Ind. 41.

⁵ *Henchliff v. Hinman*, 18 Wis. 138.

⁶ 1 Wood, Conv. 194; *Co. Lit.* 36, n., 22, n.; *Willis v. Jermin*, 2 Leon. 97; s. c. *Cro. Eliz.* 167; *Com. Dig. Fait*, A. 3; 2 Rolle, Abr. Fait, I.

⁷ *Western R. R. v. Babcock*, 6 Met. 356.

persons than the immediate parties to the same. And a delivery may be made good by a subsequent assent, though originally invalid for want of it, upon the principle, — *omnis rati-habitio mandato æquiparatur*.¹

28. Thus, a deed may be delivered to the grantee himself, or it may be delivered to a stranger unknown to the person for whose benefit it is made, if so intended by the maker, and this may be an effectual delivery, the moment it is assented to by the grantee, even though the grantor may in the mean time have deceased.² Thus, in *Hatch v. Hatch*, and *Foster v. Mansfield*,³ a father made a deed to his son, and [*580] placed it in a stranger's hands to be delivered to the grantee on the grantor's death. It remained there until the death of the latter, and was then delivered to the grantee, and was held to be a good deed, although the original delivery was not regarded as that of an escrow by the grantor. The case of *Belden v. Carter* involved the same principle, and the case of *Doe v. Knight* furnishes, perhaps, a still stronger illustration⁴ of this doctrine. There, one Wynne, being indebted to Garnans, made and executed a mortgage to him in his absence and without his knowledge, in the presence of his niece, who witnessed it, and to whom he declared that he delivered it. He afterwards had the deed in his possession, wrapped in an envelope, and handed the envelope to his sister, telling her to keep it, and that it belonged to Garnans. After that he took it again, and, at a subsequent time, handed it again to her, saying, "put this by." The matter stood thus until Wynne died, when the sister handed the parcel to a friend of Garnans, through whom he received it. Wynne, in his lifetime, had assured Garnans that he would secure him for his indebtedness.

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 193; *Turner v. Whidden*, 22 Me. 121; *Shirley v. Ayres*, 14 Ohio, 307; *Cooper v. Jackson*, 4 Wis. 537.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 193; Com. Dig. Fait, A. 3; *Hatch v. Hatch*, 9 Mass. 307; *Hulick v. Scovil*, 4 Gilm. 176; *Buffum v. Green*, 5 N. H. 71; *Belden v. Carter*, 4 Day, 66; *Ruggles v. Lawson*, 13 Johns. 285; *Wheelwright v. Wheelwright*, 2 Mass. 447, 452; *Doe v. Knight*, 5 B. & C. 671; *O'Kelly v. O'Kelly*, 8 Met. 436; *Foster v. Mansfield*, 3 Met. 412; *Wesson v. Stevens*, 2 Ired. Eq. 557; *Morrison v. Kelly*, 22 Ill. 626; *Marsh v. Austin*, 1 Allen, 238; *Cooper v. Jackson*, 4 Wis. 553.

³ *Hatch v. Hatch*, 9 Mass. 307; *Foster v. Mansfield*, 3 Met. 412; *O'Kelly v. O'Kelly*, 8 Met. 439.

⁴ *Belden v. Carter*, 4 Day, 66; *Doe v. Knight*, 5 B. & C. 671.

The judge, who tried the case, instructed the jury that if Wynne retained the control of the deed, there was no delivery; but that if he parted with it, and for the benefit of Garnans, in order that it should be delivered to him in Wynne's lifetime, or after his death, it would be a good delivery, which ruling the court of King's Bench held to be correct, and the verdict in favor of the validity of the deed was sustained. Although, in referring to the case cited, the court of Georgia, in *Oliver v. Stone*, remark: "I must say I think *Garnans v. Knight* somewhat difficult to uphold;" it forms one of a pretty large class of cases wherein the principle is maintained, that, so far as the grantor is concerned, it will be a sufficient act of delivery if, after executing a deed, he place it in the hands of another, out of his own possession and control, if done with an intent that it should take effect as his deed, in favor of the grantee, and the same will become effectual to pass the estate granted, as soon as the same is known and assented to by the grantee.¹ It would be otherwise, if the grantor retain control over the deed as to its delivery, as when he delivers it to a third party to keep and deliver it to the grantee named, *unless* he should call for it again.² The law on this subject is thus stated by Shaw, C. J. "It is true, that in theory of law, the grantee in a deed poll is held to be a party by accepting the deed. But the deed does not derive its efficacy as a grant and conveyance from the act of the grantee in accepting, but from that of the grantor in executing it. In case of a plain, absolute conveyance without condition, either no special acceptance is necessary to give it effect, or, what is nearly the same thing, the acceptance of the grantee will be presumed. So the delivery of the deed to a third person, unconditionally, for the use of the grantee, gives effect to the deed. From these considerations, it seems to follow that the efficacy of a deed to transfer real estate by

¹ *Cin. Wil. &c. R. R. v. Iliff*, 13 Ohio St. 249; *Oliver v. Stone*, 24 Ga. 63, 70; *Mallett v. Page*, 8 Ind. 364; *Guard v. Bradley*, 7 Ind. 600; *Stewart v. Weed*, 11 Ind. 92; *Butler & Baker's case*, 3 Rep. 26 b; *Broom, Com.* 275; *Phillips v. Houston*, 5 Jones (Law), 302; *Cloud v. Calhoun*, 10 Rich. (Eq.) 358, 362; *Boody v. Dayis*, 20 N. H. 140; *Mitchell v. Ryan*, 3 Ohio St. 382; *Church v. Gilman*, 15 Wend. 656.

² *Phillips v. Houston, sup.*, and cases cited; *Deardorff v. Foresman*, 14 Am. L. Reg. 545; *Cook v. Brown*, 34 N. H. 476.

deed poll, does not depend upon the legal capacity of the grantee to transfer an estate by deed." It was accordingly held, that a conveyance may be made by deed poll, to an infant, lunatic, or *feme covert*, although such grantee would be under legal disability to make a conveyance.¹ The foregoing remarks, however, it would seem, are to be taken as a statement of what, in certain cases, would be taken as *evidence* of assent on the part of the grantee, rather than as doing away with what seems to be a first principle, that no man can be compelled to become a purchaser of land without his knowledge and assent. Thus, it is said, "the act of making, acknowledging, and having the deed recorded, would not be sufficient to transfer the title, for the reason that a contract can only be consummated by the act of two persons, or, in technical language, by the assent of two minds, one agreeing to part with, the other to accept the title." "It is no answer to this position to say, that when a deed has been properly acknowledged and recorded, a delivery will be presumed, for this presumption, like all presumptions which exist only for the sake of convenience, must yield to facts when established."²

29. But although several of the cases seem to sustain the doctrine, that a delivery of a deed to a stranger for the grantee, where it is obviously for his benefit, passes the title at once, as an effectual delivery; the better opinion seems to be, that no deed can take effect as having been delivered, until such act of delivery has been assented to by the grantee, and he shall have done something equivalent to an actual acceptance of it; and, *moreover, the act of delivery and ac- [*581] ceptance must, from the nature of the case, be mutual and concurrent acts. "Delivery always implies an acceptance by the person to whom the delivery is made," and a presumption of delivery arising from the deed being recorded, may be rebutted by proof. "Acceptance by grantee is an essential part

¹ *Concord Bank v. Bellis*, 10 Cush. 278; *Mitchell v. Ryan*, 3 Ohio St. 387; *Peavey v. Tilton*, 18 N. H. 152.

² *Bullitt v. Taylor*, 34 Miss. 741. See *Boardman v. Dean*, 34 Penn. St. 252; *Berkshire M. F. Ins. Co. v. Sturgis*, 13 Gray, 177. See *Mitchell v. Ryan*, 3 Ohio St. 386, 387; *Jackson v. Bodle*, 20 Johns. 184; *Dikes v. Miller*, 24 Texas, 417; *Derry Bank v. Webster*, 44 N. H. 268; *Somers v. Pumphrey*, 24 Ind. 243; *Mallett v. Page*, 8 Ind. 364.

of a delivery."¹ Proof of an acceptance, at a time subsequent to that of the act of delivery, would not be sufficient to give validity to the deed, unless the act of delivery be a continuing one in its nature, such as leaving a deed on deposit to be accepted by the grantee at his election.² Thus, where a father made a deed to his son, and caused the same to be recorded in the registry of deeds, where it lay at the time of the death of his son, who never knew of or assented to such deed, it was held, that it never took effect to pass any title to his son, nor could his heirs claim under it.³ It is an essential prerequisite, that the instrument in question should be understood by the parties to be completed and ready for delivery, in order to have a mere placing it in the hands or possession of the grantee or his agent construed into a delivery. Thus, in one case, it was handed by one party to the other to examine and see if it was satisfactory, it being understood that it might be necessary to alter or correct it. In another, it was handed to the attorney of the other party, accompanied by a declaration by the party executing it, that he was not to be bound until something else was done. And in both these cases it was held not to be a delivery.⁴ While, therefore, it is not competent to control a deed by parol evidence, where it has once taken effect by delivery, it is always competent, by such evidence, to show that the deed, though in the grantee's hands, has never been delivered.⁵

¹ *Wilsey v. Dennis*, 44 Barb. 359; *Fonda v. Sage*, 46 Barb. 123; *Foster v. Beardsley Co.* 47 Barb. 513; *Younge v. Guilbeau*, 3 Wall. (U. S.) 636, 641.

² *Hulick v. Scovil*, 4 Gilm. 177, a very fully considered and ably reasoned opinion; *Buffum v. Green*, 5 N. H. 71; *Canning v. Pinkham*, 1 N. H. 353; *Church v. Gilman*, 15 Wend. 656, 660; *Jackson v. Dunlap*, 1 Johns. Cas. 114; *Lloyd v. Giddings*, 7 Ohio, pt. 2, 50; *Jackson v. Bodle*, 20 Johns. 187; 1 Wood, Conv. 240.

³ *Maynard v. Maynard*, 10 Mass. 456. See also *Jackson v. Phipps*, 12 Johns. 418; *Pennel v. Weyant*, 2 Harring. 501; *Elsev v. Metcalf*, 1 Denio, 326; *Jones v. Bush*, 4 Harring. 1. But see *Mitchell v. Ryan*, 3 Ohio St. 377.

⁴ *Graves v. Dudley*, 20 N. Y. 76; *Millership v. Brookes*, 5 H. & Nor. 797; *Black v. Shreve*, 13 N. J. 457. See *Parker v. Parker*, 1 Gray, 409; *Howe v. Dewing*, 2 Gray, 476; *Worrall v. Munn*, 1 Seld. 229. Note and cases collected, Am. ed. 5 H. & Nor. 801; *Phil. W. & B. Railroad Co. v. Howard*, 13 How. 334; *Bell v. Ingestre*, 12 A. & E. N. s. 317; *Dyson v. Bradshaw*, 23 Cal. 528; *Berry v. Anderson*, 22 Ind. 39; *Fonda v. Sage*, 46 Barb. 124.

⁵ *Black v. Lamb*, 1 Beasley (N. J.), 116; *Roberts v. Jackson*, 1 Wend. 478; *Johnson v. Baker*, 4 B. & Ald. 440; *Black v. Shreve*, 13 N. J. 457, 459.

30. Nor will the making and executing a deed in all respects, even to registering the same, be of any validity, unless delivered in the lifetime of the grantor, though, if the recording of the deed is intended as a delivery, and is known to the grantee, and he assents to the same, it will take effect from the time he so assents.¹

31. If a deed is found in the grantee's hands, a delivery and acceptance is always presumed.²

32. And although where the grantor has parted with all control of the deed, and it is upon its face beneficial to the grantee, an acceptance thereof may be presumed notwithstanding the *delivery was made to one without [*582] any previous authority to receive it, still it would be necessary, in order for this presumption to be entertained, that the person claiming under such a deed should show, affirmatively, if the fact is doubtful, that the grantee was *in esse* at the time of such delivery made.³

33. Where the grantor, after executing the deed ready for delivery, retained it by an agreement with the grantee as security for the payment of the purchase-money, it was held to be neither a delivery nor an acceptance.⁴ But where the parties were together, and a deed was duly executed and acknowledged, a declaration by the grantor that he delivered it as his

¹ Jackson v. Leek, 12 Wend. 107; Barns v. Hatch, 3 N. H. 304; Denton v. Perry, 5 Verm. 382; Harrison v. Phillips Academy, 12 Mass. 455, 461; Jackson v. Phipps, 12 Johns. 418; Jackson v. Richards, 6 Cow. 617; Elsev v. Metcalf, 1 Denio, 326; Hedge v. Drew, 12 Pick. 141; Powers v. Russell, 13 Pick. 69, 77; Parker v. Hill, 8 Met. 447, that a delivery, after being recorded, is good; Porter v. Buckingham, 2 Harring. 197; Baldwin v. Maultsby, 5 Ired. 505; Stilwell v. Hubbard, 20 Wend. 44; Rathbun v. Rathbun, 6 Barb. 98; Oliver v. Stone, 24 Ga. 63; Berkshire M. F. Ins. Co. v. Sturgis, 13 Gray, 177; Boardman v. Dean, 34 Penn. St. 252; Boody v. Davis, 20 N. H. 140; Shaw v. Hayward, 7 Cush. 174; Mills v. Gore, 20 Pick. 28; ante, pl. 20, a.

² Clarke v. Ray, 1 Harr. & J. 319; Ward v. Lewis, 4 Pick. 518; Ward v. Ross, 1 Stew. (Ala.) 136; Canning v. Pinkham, 1 N. H. 353; Cutts v. York Co. 18 Me. 190; Green v. Yarnall, 6 Mo. 326; Houston v. Stanton, 11 Ala. 412; Chandler v. Temple, 4 Cush. 285; Southern Life Ins. Co. v. Cole, 4 Fla. 359. But it is competent to show that it was surreptitiously obtained. Den v. Farlee, 1 N. J. 279; Morris v. Henderson, 37 Miss. 501; Adams v. Frye, 3 Met. 109; Williams v. Sullivan, 10 Rich. Eq. 217; Little v. Gibson, 39 N. H. 505; Black v. Shreve, 13 N. J. 459.

³ Hulick v. Scovill, 4 Gilm. 190; Bensley v. Atwill, 12 Cal. 231, 236.

⁴ Jackson v. Dunlap, 1 Johns. Cas. 114.

deed, without asserting any right to retain it, was held to be a delivery, although the deed was left where it was executed, and was afterwards found in the grantor's possession.¹ But where one, in the execution of an agreement to convey lands, tenders a deed fully executed and acknowledged in performance of that agreement, which the grantee refuses to accept, it in no manner affects the vendor's title to his estate.²

34. Where the deed is delivered to the grantee named, the law presumes it was done with an intent, on the part of the grantor, to make it his effectual deed. But if it is delivered to a stranger, and nothing is said at the time, no such inference is drawn from the act of delivery.³ But it has been held, that depositing a deed in the post-office, under a direction to the grantee, is tantamount to sending it by a special messenger, and is a delivery.⁴ The law bearing upon two or three of the points above stated, is commented upon by the court of Ohio, in a case where the grantor caused his deed to be recorded, and the question was made as to its delivery. They held, that the record of a deed is *prima facie* evidence of its delivery; that the delivery of a deed to a stranger for the use of the grantee may be a sufficient delivery, depending upon the intention with which it was done. If delivered to the grantee himself, no words are necessary, since the law presumes in such case it is for his use. If delivered to a stranger, there is no such presumption, and there must, therefore, be some evidence beyond such delivery, of his intent thereby to part with his title. But no precise form of words is necessary to declare such intent. Anything that shows that the delivery is for the use of the grantee, is enough. And having it recorded is of this character, so far as to raise a reasonable presumption, unless controlled by other evidence. As a general rule, acceptance by the grantee is necessary to constitute a good delivery, for a man may refuse even a gift. But the assent may be before as well as after the deed made. And where the grant is a

¹ *Scrugham v. Wood*, 15 Wend. 545; *Souverbye v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 253, 255; *Stewart v. Weed*, 11 Ind. 92.

² *Cole v. Gill*, 14 Iowa, 529.

³ *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 58; *Church v. Gilman*, 15 Wend. 656; 1 Wood, Conv. 195. *For what should be said, see *Souverbye v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 255.

⁴ *M'Kinney v. Rhoades*, 5 Watts, 343.

pure unqualified gift, the presumption of acceptance can only be rebutted by proof of dissent. "And it matters not that the grantee never knew of the conveyance, for, as his assent is presumed from its beneficial character, the presumption can be overthrown only by proof that he did not know of and rejected it." It is upon this ground that a deed to an infant child is sustained. And in that case, the deed was held to pass the title from a father to a daughter, though she died without knowledge of its having been made, in which respect it is opposed to the case of *Maynard v. Maynard*, cited above.¹ In Alabama, where a grant was made by deed to two children of the age of ten years, by a father, who handed the deed to their mother, and "told her to keep it," but nothing more was said or done, the court held that it depended upon his intention whether it should be a delivery of the deed or not, and left it to the jury to find.² But until known or assented to by the grantee, the granted premises were held liable to be attached by a creditor of the grantor, or to be mortgaged by him.³

35. The relation of a party to whom the deed is delivered, to the estate and the grantee named, may be such that the law will imply an acceptance sufficient to give effect to the deed. Thus, in one case, where delivery was made to a father for his daughter, his acceptance was held sufficient from his character as her natural guardian.⁴ So where a deed of trust was delivered to the *cestui que trust*, who was the beneficiary under the provisions of the deed.⁵

*36. If there are several grantees in a deed, it may [*583] be delivered to one on one day, and to another on another day, and thereby take effect as to all.⁶ But a delivery

¹ *Mitchell v. Ryan*, 3 Ohio St. 377; *Folk v. Varn*, 9 Rich. Eq. 303, *acced't*. See *Maynard v. Maynard*, 10 Mass. 456; ante, p. *581, pl. 29, and cases cited; *Wall v. Wall*, 30 Miss. 91, acceptance presumed from the beneficial character of the grant, though unknown to the grantee. So *Tibbals v. Jacobs*, 31 Conn. 428.

² *Gregory v. Walker*, 38 Ala. 26, 33.

³ *Day v. Griffith*, 15 Iowa, 103; *Woodbury v. Fisher*, 20 Ind. 389; *Parmelee v. Simpson*, 5 Wall. U. S. 86; *Johnson v. Farley*, 45 N. H. 509; *Derry Bank v. Webster*, 44 N. H. 268.

⁴ *Bryan v. Wash*, 2 Gilm. 557.

⁵ *Souverbye v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 240; *Jaques v. Methodist Church*, 17 Johns. 577; s. c. 1 Johns. Ch. 456; *Cloud v. Calhoun*, 10 Rich. Eq. 362; *Morrison v. Kelly*, 22 Ill. 612.

⁶ 1 Wood, Conv. 195.

to one does not operate as a delivery to the other, unless so expressed by the grantor.¹ And where an indenture of partition, prepared to be signed by several co-tenants, was executed by one and came into the possession of the others, who refused to execute, it was held not to be a delivery on his part.²

37. It has been stated that to give effect to a deed, there must be an assent to it by the grantee, and where it is in his favor, the law inclines to presume such assent; yet if a deed be made to a married woman, and her husband dissents thereto, it is void as to her, at common law.³ If the grant be to husband and wife, and he assent, she cannot, after his death, avoid the deed by verbal waiver or disclaimer of the title.⁴ But it is unqualifiedly stated by Coke, that if an estate be conveyed to a wife, and the husband expressly assents to the same, she may, after his death, and so may her heirs, waive the same.⁵

38. And, generally, if a deed is delivered to one who is authorized by another to receive it for him, or to one without such previous authority, but authorized by the grantee to retain it for him, it is held to constitute an effectual delivery.⁶ Where the deed conveys an estate to one which is defeasible upon contingency, and the same is thereupon to go over to another, as a contingent limitation, or there is a contingent remainder limited after the expiration of a particular estate, a delivery of the deed to the first taker is a delivery as to all who may be to take under it.⁷ And a remainder-man may take under a deed poll delivered to the tenant of the particular estate, though a stranger to the deed.⁸

39. There is a class of cases which it is enough simply to

¹ *Hannah v. Swarner*, 8 Watts, 9.

² *Tewksbury v. O'Connell*, 20 Cal. 69.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 240; *Melvin v. Proprs. &c.* 16 Pick. 167; *Whelpdale's case*, 5 Rep. 119; *Butler & Baker's case*, 3 Rep. 29; *Foley v. Howard*, 8 Clarke (Iowa), 36; Co. Lit. 3 a.

⁴ *Butler & Baker's case*, 3 Rep. 26; 1 Wood, Conv. 240.

⁵ Co. Lit. 3 a.

⁶ *Turner v. Whidden*, 22 Me. 121; *Stewart v. Weed*, 11 Ind. 94; *Guard v. Bradley*, 7 Ind. 600; *Western R. R. v. Babcock*, 6 Met. 346, case of a delivery to agent of the corporation.

⁷ *Folk v. Varn*, 9 Rich. Eq. 303.

⁸ *Phelps v. Phelps*, 17 Md. 134.

refer to in this connection, where courts, in their eagerness to carry out the intent of the grantor, and, presuming an intent on the part of the grantee from the manifest advantage to result to him from the deed, so far assume an acceptance to be made, as to hold that a good and sufficient delivery has taken place and become effectual, before any actual acceptance by the grantee. These are so nearly exceptions to the general rule as to deserve a separate consideration, and embrace that class of conveyances which debtors in embarrassed circumstances make for the benefit of creditors when delivering a deed of assignment, absolutely and unconditionally, to a third person, to be delivered to the creditor. Of this class is *Merrills v. Swift*, where the deed took precedence of an attachment, though not actually received and accepted by the creditor till after an attachment made.¹

40. While such is the effect of a delivery, where it is made with an intent to pass a present title, there may be a *conditional delivery where the deed, though delivered, [*584] will not take effect until the happening of some condition annexed thereto. A deed thus delivered, is called an *escrow*.²

41. But a deed can never be an escrow, if delivered to the grantee himself, unless for the express purpose of being handed to another person, even though accompanied with an express condition, and not to take effect unless such condition is complied with. The title will, nevertheless, pass by such delivery.³ It has, accordingly, been held, that, if one of two obligors in an instrument deliver it to the obligee, it is an effectual delivery as to both. So if an obligor execute an instrument and deliver it to his co-obligor, or retain it himself, as an escrow, to be

¹ *Merrills v. Swift*, 18 Conn. 257; *Wilt v. Franklin*, 1 Bin. 502. *Tompkins v. Wheeler*, 16 Peters, 119.

² *Termes de la Ley*, "Escrow."

³ *Shep. Touch.* 59; *Whyddon's case*, Cro. Eliz. 520; *Fairbanks v. Metcalf*, 8 Mass. 230, 238; *Brown v. Reynolds*, 5 Sneed, 639; *Cin. Wil. & Z. Railroad v. Liff*, 13 Ohio St. 249-254. But see, as to conditional delivery of bonds, 1 *Wood, Conv.* 193; *Hawksland v. Gatchel*, Cro. Eliz. 835, which is denied in *Thoroughgood's case*, 9 Rep. 137; *Lawton v. Sager*, 11 Barb. 349; *Com. Dig. Fait*, A. 4; *Williams v. Green*, F. Moore, 642; *Holford v. Parker*, Hob. 246, and *Williams' note*; *Foley v. Cowgill*, 5 Blackf. 18; *Gilbert v. N. A. F. Ins. Co.* 23 Wend. 43; *Fireman's Ins. Co. v. McMillan*, 29 Ala. 160; *Ward v. Lewis*, 4 Pick. 520.

delivered to the obligee, it will not have that character. The importance of this will be perceived when it is recollected that, after a deed has been delivered as an escrow, it is no longer revocable by the maker, but the same will take effect whenever the condition has happened or been complied with, upon which it is to be finally delivered.¹ If the delivery is made to the party, no matter what may be the form of the words, the delivery is absolute, and the deed takes effect presently, as the deed of the grantor, discharged of the conditions upon which the delivery was made.² But where a composition deed was executed on part of a surety and delivered to a creditor, to be void if the creditors did not sign it, the creditor taking it to get their signatures, it was held to be an escrow of no binding obligation unless all the creditors signed it.³ And this will be true, though after its delivery in the manner above stated, the deed, by the agreement of the parties, be placed in a stranger's hands to remain till they call for it. It must, after all, depend, in each case, upon whether the parties at the time meant it to be a delivery to take effect presently. As where a deed was handed to the grantee, to place it in a third person's hands to keep as an escrow, and it was so received and transmitted, no title vested in the grantee, till a second delivery.⁴ But in order to have a deed have the character and qualities of an escrow, it must be completely executed in all respects, except the formal delivery.⁵

42. But a deed is a presently operative deed, and not an escrow, though placed in a stranger's hands, with a direction to deliver it to the grantee, at some future day or upon a certain

¹ *Millett v. Parker*, 2 Met. (Ky.) 608, 616; *Worrall v. Munn*, 1 Seld. 229; *Wight v. Shelby R. R.* 16 B. Mon. 4. See *M. & I. Plank Road Co. v. Stevens*, 10 Ind. 1.

² *Worrall v. Munn*, 1 Seld. 229. See *Herdman v. Bratten*, 2 Harring. 396; *State v. Chrisman*, 2 Ind. 126; *M. & I. Plank Road Co. v. Stevens*, 10 Ind. 1; *Black v. Shreve*, 13 N. J. 458; *Cin. & Wil. & C. Railroad v. Iliff*, 13 Ohio St. 249; *Moss v. Riddle*, 5 Cranch, 351; *Lloyd v. Giddings*, 7 Ham. (Ohio,) 52. But *contra*, *Bibb v. Reid*, 3 Ala. 88.

³ *Johnson v. Baker*, 4 B. & Ald. 440. See *Black v. Shreve*, 13 N. J. 462.

⁴ *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 59; *Den v. Partee*, 2 Dev. & B. 530; *Simonton's Estate*, 4 Watts, 180; *Murray v. Stair*, 2 B. & C. 82; *Jackson v. Sheldon*, 22 Ma. 569; *Gilbert v. N. A. Ins. Co.* 23 Wend. 43. But see this questioned in *Braman v. Bingham*, 26 N. Y. 483; *Fairbanks v. Metcalf*, 8 Mass. 239.

⁵ *Deardorff v. Foresman*, 14 Am. L. Reg. 551.

event, unless there be some condition connected with such delivery, the happening of which, by the terms of the authority in the receiver, must precede delivery to the grantee, and until then, the deed is to have no effect. Such, in fact, was the delivery in the cases above cited, of *Hatch v. Hatch*, *Belden v. Carter*, and *Doe v. Knight*, and the law upon the subject is thus stated by Perkins: "If I deliver an obligation or other writing unto a man as my deed, to deliver unto him to *whom it is made, when he shall come to York, it is [*585] my deed presently, and if he shall deliver it to him before he come to York, yet I shall not avoid it; and if I die before he come to York, and, afterwards, he cometh to York, and he delivereth the deed unto him, it is clearly good and my deed, and that it cannot be if it were not my deed before my death."¹ But it does not take effect until the second delivery, unless the grantor in the mean time becomes incapable of delivering the deed, when it relates back to the first delivery.² Whether putting a deed into a third person's hands is a present delivery or an *escrow*, depends upon the *intent* of the parties. If the delivery depends upon the performance of a *condition*, it is an *escrow*, otherwise it is a *present grant*, though it be to wait the lapse of time or happening of an event. If it is to be delivered at the grantor's death, it is a present deed, and a quitclaim by the grantee, intermediate, would pass his estate. But if it be expressly delivered, as an *escrow*, to be delivered at a future time, it is not a present conveyance.³ But it was held by Denio, J., that though, in the case supposed, the delivery at the grantee's death would retroact so as to make the estate the grantee's from the first delivery, it would not take effect so as to pass the estate until the second delivery.⁴ But to have it a

¹ Perkins, § 143; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 58, 59. See *Wheelwright v. Wheelwright*, 2 Mass. 447. But see this doctrine doubted, *State Bank v. Evans*, 3 Green, 155, and see 4 Kent, Com. 455, note. But is fully sustained by *Foster v. Mansfield*, 3 Met. 412; *O'Kelly v. O'Kelly*, 8 Met. 436; *Murray v. Stair*, 2 B. & C. 82; *Shaw v. Hayward*, 7 Cush. 175.

² *Foster v. Mansfield*, 3 Met. 412, 415.

³ *Foster v. Mansfield*, 3 Met. 414, 415; *Price v. P. & Ft. W. & C. Railroad*, 34 Ill. 13. See 2 Roll. Abr. 24, pl. 17. *Tooley v. Dibble*, 2 Hill, 641; *Braman v. Bingham*, 26 N. Y. 483; *Hathaway v. Payne*, 34 N. Y. 106, 107; *Cook v. Brown*, 34 N. H. 465.

⁴ *Hathaway v. Payne*, *sup.* 113.

delivery in the case supposed, so as to pass an estate, the grantor must absolutely part with the control, or dominion over the deed. If it is subject to be recalled by the grantor, before delivery, it is not held to be a delivery.¹ Thus, where A made a deed to his sister, and left it in a third person's hands, without her knowledge, and at his death devised two acres of his land to B, and, after his death, to his sister, "together with other lands I have already conveyed her," it was held to be no delivery of the deed, and that the sister took by will, having reference to the deed for what he had devised to her.²

43. Writers, accordingly, are careful to caution persons making deeds and wishing to deliver them as *escrows*, to use a proper form of words expressive of their intent, such, for instance, as "I deliver this as an escrow to you to keep until such a day, and upon condition, &c. And then you shall deliver this escrow to him as my deed." It probably would not be necessary to use any technical form of words in such a case, and would be sufficient if the party making the deed, when he placed it in a third party's hands, declared, in intelligible terms, that it was not to be deemed or delivered as his deed, until some future time and on the happening of some future event, thereby expressly negating the intention to treat it as his present deed, or as being to take effect presently.³

44. When a deed has been delivered as an escrow, it has no effect, as a deed, until the condition has been performed,⁴ and no estate passes until the second delivery,⁵ though,

¹ Shirley v. Ayres, 14 Ohio, 310; Cook v. Brown, 34 N. H. 465; Fitch v. Bunch, 30 Cal. 213; Deardorff v. Foresman (Ind.), 14 Am. L. Reg. 545; Berry v. Anderson, 22 Ind. 36; Millett v. Parker, 2 Met. (Ky.) 613.

² Thompson v. Lloyd, 49 Penn. St. 128.

³ Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 58, 59; 1 Wood, Conv. 196; Jackson v. Catlin, 2 Johns. 248, 259; Fairbanks v. Metcalf, 8 Mass. 230, 238; Jackson v. Sheldon, 22 Me. 569; White v. Bailey, 14 Conn. 271; a deed sent enclosed in a letter to a third person, to be delivered to grantee upon his paying a certain sum, was an escrow; Clark v. Gifford, 10 Wend. 310; Gilbert v. N. A. Ins. Co. 23 Wend. 43; State Bank v. Evans, 3 Green, 155; Millett v. Parker, 2 Met. (Ky.) 616; Shoenberger v. Hackman, 37 Penn. St. 87; State v. Peck, 53 Me. 293; Johnson v. Baker, 4 B. & Ald. 440.

⁴ Com. Dig. Fait, A. 4; Hinman v. Booth, 21 Wend. 267; Fairbanks v. Metcalf, 8 Mass. 230, 238; Perk. § 138; Touch. 59; Black v. Shreve, 13 N. J. 458.

⁵ Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 59; Green v. Putnam, 1 Barb. 500, 504; Frost v.

when such *second delivery has been made, it relates [*586] back to the first, for many purposes, and is considered as a consummation of an inchoate act then begun.¹ But if, in the mean time, the estate should be levied upon by a creditor of the grantor, he would hold by virtue of such levy, in preference to the grantee in the deed.² Nor does such second delivery carry a right to the intermediate rents accruing between the first and second delivery.³ But whether the deed, when thus delivered, shall retroact so as to have the same effect upon intermediate rights, as if fully delivered at first, has, in some cases, been held to depend upon the intention of the parties, and in others to turn upon the point, that such a construction was necessary to protect the grantee against intervening rights.⁴ If the deed is delivered before the previous condition is performed, it will not be the deed of the grantor, or have any effect as such.⁵ The effect to be given to the obtaining possession of a deed delivered as an escrow, before the condition is performed, was fully considered in a case where the grantee obtained such possession by fraud, before the condition had been performed, and then conveyed the estate to an innocent purchaser. The court say: "Until the performance of the condition, it (the deed) must remain a mere scroll in writing, of no more efficacy than any other written scroll. But when, upon the performance of the condition, it is delivered to the grantee or his agent, it then becomes a deed to all intents and purposes, and the title passes from the

Beekman, 1 Johns. Ch. 297; Everts v. Agnes, 4 Wis. 351; James v. Vanderheyden, 1 Paige, 385.

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 197; Ruggles v. Lawson, 13 Johns. 285; Shep. Touch. 59, 73; Butler & Baker's case, 3 Rep. 35; Shirley v. Ayres, 14 Ohio, 307.

² Jackson v. Rowland, 6 Wend. 666; Frost v. Beekman, 1 Johns. Ch. 297; Jackson v. Catlin, 2 Johns. 248.

³ Perkins, § 10; 3 Prest. Abst. 65.

⁴ Price v. Pittsburg, &c. R. R. 34 Ill. 34, 36; Shirley v. Ayres, 14 Ohio, 310.

⁵ Perkins, § 138; but see Id. § 144; Stiles v. Brown, 16 Verm. 563, 569; Jackson v. Sheldon, 22 Me. 569. See Hooper v. Ramsbottom, 6 Taunt. 12; State Bank v. Evans, 3 Green, 155; Rhodes v. Gardiner, 30 Me. 110, unless the grantee holding it convey the land to a *bona fide* purchaser, ignorant of the fact as to the delivery. Blight v. Schenck, 10 Penn. St. 285; Peter v. Wright, 6 Ind. 183; Souverbye v. Arden, 1 Johns. Ch. 240; Berry v. Anderson, 22 Ind. 40; even an innocent purchaser cannot hold in such case. Smith v. So. Royalton Bank, 32 Verm. 341; People v. Bostwick, 32 N. Y. 450.

date of the delivery. The delivery, to be valid, must be with the assent of the grantor. If the grantee obtain possession of the escrow, without performance of the condition, he obtains no title thereby, because there has been no delivery with the assent of the grantor, which assent is dependent upon compliance with the condition." "The recording of an escrow does not make it a deed." They held that the depositary of an escrow was as much the agent of the grantee as the grantor. "He is as much bound to deliver the deed, on performance of the condition, as he is to withhold it until performance." And being thus in the hands of the agent of the grantee, the moment the condition is performed, the deed takes effect without any formal delivery into the hands of the grantee.¹ The grantee in the case, after obtaining possession of the deed, had it recorded, and then conveyed the estate to an innocent purchaser. But the court, upon full consideration, held that the purchaser acquired nothing by his deed, because his grantor never acquired any title by gaining possession of the escrow. They liken it to a deed which the grantee had stolen, where no title is gained thereby, and distinguish it from one obtained by fraud from the grantor himself, where a title does pass by the actual delivery by the grantor.² A grantor may deliver his deed to the agent of the grantee, to be delivered to the grantee if certain conditions are performed; otherwise to return it to the grantor; and if the agent accept it on those terms, the delivery will not give effect to the deed unless the condition is performed.³

45. The instances given in the books, illustrating some of these propositions, seem to imply the necessity of a second formal delivery to the party who is to take by the deed, unless such a construction would defeat the intent of the parties. Thus it is said in the *Butler and Baker's* case, that "to some intent the second delivery hath relation to the first delivery, and in some not; and yet, in truth, the second delivery hath all its force by the first delivery, and the second is but an execution and consummation of the first. And therefore, in such case of

¹ *Shirley v. Ayres*, 14 Ohio, 308.

² *Everts v. Agnes*, 4 Wis. 343; s. c. 6 Wis. 453; *Black v. Shreve*, 13 N. J. 438; *Dyson v. Bradshaw*, 23 Cal. 536.

³ *Cincin. Wil. & Z. Railroad v. Iliff*, 13 Ohio St. 249-254; *Southern L. Ins. &c. Co. v. Cole*, 4 Fla. 359.

necessity, *ut res magis valeat quam pereat*, it shall have relation, by fiction, to be made his deed *ab initio* by force of the first delivery. And therefore, if at the time of the first delivery, the lessor be a *feme sole*, and before the second delivery she take a husband, or if before the second delivery she dieth, in this case, if the second delivery shall not have relation to this intent to make it the deed of the lessor, *ab initio*, but only from the second delivery, the deed in both cases should be void, and therefore, in such case, for necessity, and *ut res magis valeat quam pereat*, to this intent, by fiction of law, it shall be *a [*587] deed *ab initio*, and yet, in truth, it was not his deed till the second delivery." And the same rule applies, if the party who makes the deed dies before the event happens when it is to be delivered.¹ And, in such case, if money is paid as a performance of the condition after the grantor's death, the same will go to the heirs, and not the personal representatives of the grantor.² But if a *feme covert* deliver a deed as an escrow, and become discoverd before the second delivery, such second delivery would give no validity to the deed, the first being void.³

45 a. There is a class of cases growing out of the conveyance of lands, which is required to be noticed here, as they seem to conflict with some of the doctrines hereinbefore stated. Thus, it has been laid down as a general proposition, that, upon the execution and delivery of a deed, the title of the grantor passes to and vests in the grantee, and that no one ceases to be the owner of an estate, the soil and freehold of which have once vested in him, by mere abandonment of the same, without some deed of conveyance. But cases like the following have occurred, where the title of an owner has been held to

¹ 3 Prest. Abst. 65; Butler & Baker's case, 3 Rep. 36; Perryman's case, 5 Rep. 84 b; Perkins, §§ 11, 138-140; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 59; Jackson v. Catlin, 2 Johns. 248, 259; Hatch v. Hatch, 9 Mass. 307, 310; 1 Wood, Conv. 197; Jackson v. Rowland, 6 Wend. 666; Holford v. Parker, Hob. 246 a, and Williams' note; Shirley v. Ayres, 14 Ohio, 309; Ruggles v. Lawson, 13 Johns. 283. See Carr v. Hoxie, 5 Mason, 60; Evans v. Gibbs, 6 Humph. 405; Frost v. Beekman, 1 Johns. Ch. 257; Hall v. Harris, 5 Ired. Eq. 303; Price v. Pittsburg, &c. Railroad, 34 Ill. 36.

² Teneick v. Flagg, 5 Dutch. 25.

³ Butler & Baker's case, 3 Rep. 34; Com. Dig. Fait, B. 5; Jennings v. Bragg, Cro. Eliz. 447.

will not be allowed to do so, to the injury of intermediate innocent purchasers, or strangers who have acquired an interest. The doctrine, as stated by Thompson, J., is: "It is a general rule, with respect to the doctrine of relation, that it shall not do wrong to strangers; as between the same parties, it may be adopted for the advancement of justice."¹ But a sale and deed made by the owner of a particular estate upon which depends a contingent remainder, will not operate, by relation, to defeat the remainder, if the deed is not actually delivered until after the same has vested.² There is, however, a large class of cases where the doctrine of relation applies to its full extent, as, for instance, where an execution title relates back to the time of the attachment creating the lien, which is perfected by the sale or levy under such execution, and cuts off intermediate conveyances.³

46 *b*. A deed of confirmation may make a voidable or defeasible estate good, but does not strengthen a void one. If a disseisee make a deed of confirmation to his disseisor, it is commensurate with the estate of the disseisor, which is a fee, and it would confirm a fee in him, though it contain no words of inheritance.⁴

47. There are two kinds of deeds known to the law, deeds poll and indentures, though the distinction between them is far less important than it was once deemed to be, when, to prevent a commission of fraud, it was considered necessary to write the two parts of a mutual agreement, or the duplicate of an instrument which was to be executed by two persons, on the same piece of parchment or paper, and then to cut them apart with an irregular line, so that the edge of one [*588] part would *fit into that of the other, *instar dentium*, and thus establish the authenticity of the several parts. This cutting of the paper or parchment is rarely, if ever, prac-

¹ *Vancourt v. Moore*, 26 Mo. 92; *Jackson v. Bard*, 4 Johns. 230, 234; *Fitz v. Doe*, 1 Blackf. 127, 130; *Samson v. Thornton*, 3 Met. 275; *Viner's Ab. Relation*, K. 4; *Butler & Baker's case*, 3 Rep. 29.

² *Thompson v. Leach*, 2 Vent. 200.

³ *Smith v. Allen*, 1 Blackf. 22; *Heywood v. Hildreth*, 9 Mass. 393; *Taylor v. Robinson*, 2 Allen, 564; *Viner's Ab. Relation*, E.; *Pierce v. Hall*, 41 Barb. 142.

⁴ Co. Lit. 295 b, 296 b; *Viner's Ab. Confirmation*, Y., pl. 5; *People v. Law*, 22 How. Prac. Cas. 125, 126; *Gilbert*, Ten. 69.

tised now, and the word *indenture* is used to describe a deed to which two or more persons are parties, and in which these enter into reciprocal and corresponding grants or obligations towards each other. Whereas a deed poll is, properly, one in which only the party making it executes it, or binds himself by it as a deed, though the grantors or grantees therein may be several in number, the ordinary purpose of a deed poll being to transfer the rights of the grantor to the grantee.¹ Indentures are bipartite, tripartite, and the like, according to the number of parts of which they consist, each of which would have as complete effect as the whole together. This form of deeds began to be used in the time of John and Henry II., and has been in use ever since that period.² It was formerly more usual for each party to sign but one of these parts, though this was done, as it was called, interchangeably, in which case the part which was executed by the grantor was usually called the "original," and the other the "counterpart." Of late, however, it has become common for each party to execute all the parts, which thereby all become original.³ Deeds poll may, generally, be said to include every kind of deed which is not an indenture.⁴ They are, usually, in form, in the first person, but they are equally good though made in the third person. And an indenture may be made in the first or the third person, though, most commonly, the latter form is adopted.⁵ Some of these deeds contain matters of grant or gift, under which are included feoffments, gifts, bargains and sales, grants and leases. Some of them contain matters of discharge, such as surrenders, releases, acquittances, defeasances, and the like.⁶ But though a *deed, in terms, be called an indenture, and be so in [*589] form, except in requiring something from both parties named, yet if it is prepared and intended for the grantor only to execute it, and he does so, it is a valid deed as to him.⁷

¹ Shep. Touch. 50; Walk. Am. Law, 576; Wms. Real Prop. 125; Dyer v. Sanford, 9 Met. 395, 406.

² Com. Dig. Fait, C. 1; Lit. § 370; Shep. Touch. 50.

³ Co. Lit. 229 a, note 140; Shep. Touch. 53; Dudley v. Sumner, 5 Mass. 438.

⁴ Co. Lit. 229 a; Com. Dig. Fait, D. 1; Giles v. Pratt, 2 Hill (S. C.), 439.

⁵ Shep. Touch. 51, 53.

⁶ Shep. Touch. 51.

⁷ Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 53, and note; Foster v. Mapes, Cro. Eliz. 212;

48. An indenture has been said to be the stronger deed of the two, especially in its effect in working an estoppel.¹ The doctrine has been maintained by some, that a party to an indenture, made and executed by another to him, will become a covenantor, and liable, as such, though he may not sign or seal the deed, if he is named in it and accepts it, and it contains covenants, which, by the terms of the deed, he is to perform. This point is very elaborately argued and expressly decided in *Finley v. Simpson*, in favor of holding such party bound as a covenantor, and the position of Mr. Platt to the contrary is controverted.

49. In Massachusetts, the remedy against a grantee in a deed poll, for failing to perform a duty prescribed in such deed for him to perform, would be assumpsit and not covenant, and the same seems to be true where the instrument is in form an indenture, if it is not executed by the party to be charged.² And the same is held in Pennsylvania.³

50. The words of an indenture are the words of either party, and though spoken as the words of one only, they are not his words alone, but may be applied to the other party also or exclusively, if they more properly belong to him, for every word that is doubtful is to be attributed to him to whom the intent of the parties shows it is most applicable.⁴

51. While the basis of most that has been said of the nature and character of deeds, as a means of creating title to lands, and of the essential elements and constituents of such [*590] deeds *may be found in the rules and principles of the common law, there are certain formalities prescribed by statute for the prevention of frauds in conveyancing, such as the registration of deeds, which remain to be considered. This is something distinct from the enrolment of deeds of bargain and sale, which was required by the statute 27 Hen. VIII. ch. 16, and was essential to the validity of such deeds ; whereas,

Hallett v. Collins, 10 How. 174; *Walk. Am. Law*, 376; *Hipp v. Hockett*, 4 Tex. 20, 25.

¹ *Finley v. Simpson*, 2 N. J. 311, 332; *Platt, Cov.* 18. See *Shep. Touch.* 52.

² *Newell v. Hill*, 2 Met. 180; *Goodwin v. Gilbert*, 9 Mass. 510; *Nugent v. Riley*, 1 Met. 117.

³ *Maule v. Weaver*, 7 Penn. St. 329.

⁴ *Shep. Touch.* 52.

with very few exceptions, relating principally to conveyances by married women, the validity of deeds between the original parties to them is not affected by their registration. There were requirements in the English process of enrolment which could not be complied with in this country without legislation, and it is declared by the court of Indiana, where deeds of bargain and sale are in use, that enrolment, according to the English law, has never been regarded in that State as necessary to the validity of such a deed.¹ In some of the counties of England, a system of registration has been in use since the time of Anne. But the landholders in that kingdom have, hitherto, successfully resisted a general introduction of any system of recording conveyances, although the importance of such a system has been urged by able committees, and the ablest writers in the country, upon the attention of Parliament. But the system is in full vigor in each of the United States, varying somewhat, in its details, but substantially the same in all. Each State has, accordingly, in its legislation, provided for officers charged with the duty of making such records, and offices within which these records are to be preserved for reference. And, to guard against imposition, in recording instruments which may have been improperly obtained, each State, except Kansas,² requires that the free and voluntary execution of the deed should be acknowledged or proved before certain officers or courts, and a certificate thereof be appended to each deed which shall be offered for record, which certificate alone authorizes the register to enter the deed upon the record. And so far as it forms a part of a wife's conveyance of her interest, is concerned, it is designed to take the place of the old English fine and recovery.³ The duty, however, of taking and certifying the acknowledgment of deeds is a ministerial and not a judicial one, and it is no objection, therefore, that the officer who takes it, stands in so near a relation to the party making the acknowledgment, as to render him incompetent to act in a judicial capacity, or that of a juror. But an acknowledgment taken by

¹ *Givan v. Doe*, 7 Blackf. 210. So in New York, *Jackson v. Wood*, 12 Johns. 74.

² *Simpson v. Mundee*, 3 Kans. 181.

³ *Morris v. Sargent*, 18 Iowa, 99.

one interested in the conveyance, is not valid.¹ But where the wife of the magistrate who took the acknowledgment of a mortgage, was the mortgagee, it was held good in Wisconsin.² It must be done by the officer within the limits of his appointment, and if done beyond these it is void.³ And it must be done according to the law of the State where the land lies.⁴ In executing this duty, moreover, the certificate of the acknowledgment should show affirmatively, that the requirements of the statute in respect to the same had been *substantially* complied with.⁵ Thus, in Illinois, omitting to state that the person acknowledging the deed was known to the magistrate who made it, was held a fatal defect.⁶ The certificate that A acknowledged the deed, when A was the *grantee*, and B the grantor, was a fatal error. But where it was, that "A, the signer," acknowledged, or "T. G., the signer," where the grantor's name was T. G. S., it was held that the court, by such a reference, might construe and correct the certificate.⁷ The certificate of the officer taking the acknowledgment is not conclusive as to the facts stated in it, but it may be impeached by evidence.⁸ But in Maryland such evidence was excluded, and in Texas the certificate is conclusive, unless impeached for fraud or imposition.⁹ In respect to the effect given to a register's certificate, the court of New Brunswick hold it conclusive, unless the fact be shown affirmatively, that the person signing as such is not the register.¹⁰

The purposes of this record are chiefly to give notice to all persons having occasion to ascertain whether there has

¹ *Wilson v. Traer*, 20 Iowa, 233; *Beaman v. Whitney*, 20 Me. 413; *Withers v. Baird*, 7 Watts, 227; *Groesbeck v. Seeley*, 13 Mich. 345.

² *Kimball v. Johnson*, 14 Wis. 683.

³ *Lynch v. Livingston*, 8 Barb. 463; s. c. 2 Seld. 422. See *Harris v. Burton*, 4 Harring. 66. See *Howard Mut. L. Assn. v. M'Intyre*, 3 Allen, 572; *Jackson v. Humphrey*, 1 Johns. 498; *Jackson v. Colden*, 4 Cow. 280; *Thurman v. Cameron*, 24 Wend. 91, 92; *contra*, *Odiorne v. Mason*, 9 N. H. 30.

⁴ *Jones v. Berkshire*, 15 Iowa, 248.

⁵ *Jacoway v. Gault*, 20 Ark. 190; *Bryan v. Ramirez*, 8 Cal. 461.

⁶ *Tully v. Davis*, 30 Ill. 108.

⁷ *Wood v. Cochrane*, 39 Verm. 544; *Chandler v. Spear*, 22 Verm. 388.

⁸ *Dodge v. Hollinshead*, 6 Minn. 46; *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 4 Johns. 161; *Edgerton v. Jones*, 10 Minn. 429; post, *595.

⁹ *Bissett v. Bissett*, 1 H. & M'H. 211; *Hardley v. Frosh*, 6 Tex. 208.

¹⁰ *Robinson v. Chassey*, 1 Hannay, N. B. 50.

been *any prior conveyance or incumbrance of any [*591] real estate; and when it is made, it becomes constructively a notice, and as effectual in law as if given personally to the party to be affected by it. It may, therefore, be stated in general and nearly unqualified terms, that between the parties to the deed, or the heirs or devisees of the grantor and the grantee, and those claiming under him, the validity of the deed is not affected by the want of record. And that the same is true as to all purchasers who may take a subsequent deed, knowing of the existence of a prior one. The authorities upon this point are numerous, and the language of the court of Pennsylvania, in one case, is as follows: "The deed was upon record, and, being there, was constructive notice to all the world." All the authorities agree that there is no difference in legal effect between actual and constructive notice.¹ But the registration of a deed is notice to those only who claim title through, or under the grantor in the recorded deed.² Nor is it notice to a grantee, in a deed already on record, of acts done by his grantor, after the first deed was recorded.³ But notice to an agent or trustee, is notice to the principal.⁴ If a vendee make a mortgage to his vendor, who puts it on record, it is no notice of the vendee's deed from the vendor, which is not recorded, as against a second purchaser from such vendor. Nor is a purchaser bound to take notice of the record of a deed made by a vendee, of the same vendor, if such vendee's deed is not itself on record, so as to complete the chain of his title.⁵ If a purchaser know that his vendor has made a prior deed of the estate to another, it will not aid him in getting his own deed on record first, that he did not know the kind of conveyance which his grantor had made.⁶ And in determining what shall be regarded as constructive notice, the courts in many of the States hold, that open and visible possession by the grantee in a deed,

¹ *Hill v. Epley*, 31 Penn. St. 335. See *Godbold v. Lambert*, 8 Rich. Eq. 155; *Belk v. Massey*, 11 Rich. (Law) 614; *Morrison v. Kelly*, 22 Ill. 610; 4 Dane, Abr. 85; *Jamaica Pond v. Chandler*, 9 Allen, 169; *Ellison v. Wilson*, 36 Verm. 67; *Wilkins v. May*, 3 Head, 176; *Speer v. Evans*, 47 Penn. St. 144; *Dixon v. Lacoste*, 1 Sm. & M. 107.

² *Ely v. Wilcox*, 20 Wis. 530; *Losey v. Simpson*, 3 Stockt. Ch. 246, 249.

³ *George v. Wood*, 9 Allen, 80.

⁴ *Myers v. Ross*, 3 Head, 59.

⁵ *Losey v. Simpson*, 3 Stockt. Ch. 246.

⁶ *Galland v. Jackman*, 26 Cal. 87.

is to be deemed such notice of its having been made.¹ While in other States a different rule prevails, holding, at least, that such possession is not to be deemed conclusive evidence of notice.² The cases cited below, are those where the courts have held that possession by other than the original owner, was evidence of notice of an unrecorded deed of some kind. But, to have it received as equivalent to actual notice, it must appear, affirmatively, to have been open, visible, exclusive, and unambiguous, such as is not liable to be misunderstood or misconstrued. And no inference is to be deduced from possession, when it is consistent with the possessory title on record.³ Open and notorious possession may be sufficient to put a purchaser on inquiry as to the existence of a deed, and he may meet this by showing that he made diligent, but ineffectual inquiry.⁴ One ground on which possession obviated the necessity of notice by record, as put in an early case in Massachusetts, was, that a man out of possession of land could not convey it. But that, of course, can apply only where the original owner is as much out of possession as if he were actually disseised.⁵ In Ohio, a purchaser is charged with notice of the equitable title of the one in possession of the estate he purchases, whatever that may be.⁶ But where a vendor sold a part of his estate and retained a part, and both he and his vendee occupied the premises, it was held not to be a notice of the purchase. To have that effect, it must be exclusive, open, and notorious, such as enclosure, cultivation, erection of buildings, and the like.⁷ In all this, it is to be remembered, that

¹ *Watkins v. Edwards*, 23 Texas, 443; *Partridge v. McKinney*, 10 Cal. 181; *Stafford v. Lick*, 7 Cal. 479; *Hunter v. Watson*, 12 Cal. 363; *Morrison v. Kelly*, 22 Ill. 610; *Helms v. May*, 29 Ga. 121; *Wyatt v. Elam*, 23 Ga. 201; *Berg v. Shipley*, 1 Grant, Cas. 429; *Coleman v. Barklew*, 3 Dutch. 357; *Lea v. Polk Co. Copper Co.* 21 How. 493.

² *Moore v. Jourdan*, 14 La. An. 414; *Nutting v. Herbert*, 37 N. H. 346; *Pomroy v. Stevens*, 11 Met. 244; *Mara v. Pierce*, 9 Gray, 306; *Dooley v. Wolcott*, 4 Allen, 406. In Pennsylvania, the court say, possession, in order to be notice, must be clear and unequivocal possession. *Billington v. Welsh*, 5 Binn. 129.

³ *Colby v. Kenniston*, 4 N. H. 262; *Emmons v. Murray*, 16 N. H. 398; *Fair v. Stevenot*, 29 Cal. 490; *Ely v. Wilcox*, 20 Wis. 531; *Patten v. Moore*, 32 N. H. 384; *Truesdale v. Ford*, 37 Ill. 210.

⁴ *Fair v. Stevenot*, 29 Cal. 490; *Lestrade v. Barth*, 19 Cal. 676.

⁵ *Anonymous*, Quincy, 370.

⁶ *McKinzie v. Perrill*, 15 Ohio St. 168.

⁷ *Billington v. Welsh*, 5 Binn. 132; *Smith v. Yule*, 31 Cal. 184; *Truesdale v.*

the recording of the deed has nothing to do with the actual passing of the title. It is but notice of that act having been already done.¹ In many States this is the effect of the statute provisions upon the subject, but in others, it is a construction of equity as well as law, that it is a fraudulent act for one who has already sold and conveyed his land, to undertake to cheat the purchaser by selling it again, and that, whoever knowing this, joins to aid him in the fraud, by accepting the deed, will not be permitted to avail himself of it in a court of justice. It is proposed to illustrate some of these general propositions, but, for obvious reasons, without attempting to go into a detail of the legislation of the several States upon the subject.

52. In the first place, it has been held in the following States, and, probably, the same rule is in force in all, that the date of the record of a deed has reference to the time of its being lodged or deposited with the proper recording officer, at the office of registration; namely, Ohio, South Carolina, New Jersey, Alabama, Rhode Island, Missouri, Kentucky, Mississippi, Iowa, Massachusetts, Virginia, Vermont, Connecticut, and Indiana.²

53. In the next place, a deed duly recorded is constructive notice of its existence and its contents, to all persons claiming what is thereby conveyed under the same grantor by subsequent purchase or mortgage, but not to other persons.³ Thus where one of several co-tenants conveyed the entire estate by

Ford, 37 Ill. 210. See upon possession being notice, *Crassen v. Swoveland*, 22 Ind. 434; *Daniels v. Davison*, 16 Ves. 249; *Woodward v. Clark*, 15 Mich. 112; *Stewart v. McSweeney*, 14 Wis. 468; *Boggs v. Anderson*, 50 Me. 161. And for what would amount to implied notice, see *Curtis v. Mundy*, 3 Met. 405.

¹ *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 354.

² *Walk. Am. Law*, 358; *Warnock v. Wightman*, 1 Brev. 331; 1 *Green*, 52; *Mallory v. Stodder*, 6 Ala. 801; *Dubose v. Young*, 10 Ala. 365; *Nichols v. Reynolds*, 1 R. L. 30; *Harrold v. Simonds*, 9 Mo. 326; *Davis v. Ownsby*, 14 Mo. 175; *Gill v. Faunterroy*, 8 B. Mon. 177; *McRaven v. McGuire*, 9 S. & M. 34, 48; *Hopping v. Burnam*, 2 *Greene*, 39, 47; *Mass. Gen. Stat.* ch. 17, § 93; *Horsley v. Garth*, 2 *Gratt.* 471; *Quirk v. Thomas*, 6 Mich. 76; *McCabe v. Grey*, 20 Cal. 509; *Anonymous*, *Quincy*, 375; *Kessler v. State*, 24 Ind. 315; *Bigelow v. Toppliff*, 25 *Verm.* 274, 285; *Hine v. Robbins*, 8 *Conn.* 347.

³ *Bates v. Norcross*, 14 *Pick.* 224, 231; *Tilton v. Hunter*, 24 *Me.* 35; *Little v. Megquier*, 2 *Me.* 176; *Crockett v. Maguire*, 10 *Mo.* 34. See *Flynt v. Arnold*, 2 *Met.* 619, for a practical application of this principle as to the remoteness of this grantor; *Whittington v. Wright*, 9 *Ga.* 23; *Shultz v. Moore*, 1 *McLean*, 520; *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 *McLean*, 412; *Walk. Am. Law*, 358; 4 *Kent, Com.* 174, note; 4

deed which was recorded, it was held not to be a constructive notice to his co-tenants of such deed, inasmuch as they did not claim under him.¹

[*592] *54. But the record of a deed is not constructive notice of its existence or contents, unless all the prerequisites prescribed by law to be observed in respect to its registration, such as its acknowledgment and the like, have been complied with. Nor would it be constructive notice, if the deed were on record in any way not authorized by law, and the same would be true of any instrument not required by law to be recorded.² It is also true, that the registry of a defective deed is no notice of title to any one. If defective in the formal requisites of its execution or proof, it is not entitled to registration at all.³ So a record of a deed in a wrong county has no effect as a notice.⁴

55. The record of a deed itself, limits by its terms the extent to which it constitutes constructive notice to others. Thus, where the condition of a mortgage deed as written, was to pay \$3,000, but the record showed the condition to be the payment of \$300, it was held to be a constructive notice of an incumbrance of \$300 only.⁵

56. In some of the States, there is a time prescribed within which a deed, when recorded, takes effect by relation, back from its delivery, and gives it precedence over intermediate con-

Greenl. Cruise, 452, note; Story, Eq. Jur. § 403; *Shaw v. Poor*, 6 Pick. 85, 88. But see ante, p. *488, in case of estoppel.

¹ *Holley v. Hawley*, 39 Verm. 532.

² *Shults v. Moore*, 1 McLean, 520; *Isham v. Bennington Co.* 19 Verm. 230; *Choteau v. Jones*, 11 Ill. 300; *Herndon v. Kimball*, 7 Ga. 432; *Tillman v. Coward*, 12 S. & M. 262; *Blood v. Blood*, 23 Pick. 80; *De Witt v. Moulton*, 17 Me. 418; *Carter v. Champion*, 8 Conn. 549; Story, Eq. Jur. § 404; *Heister v. Fortner*, 2 Binn. 40; *Shaw v. Poor*, 6 Pick. 88; *Cheney v. Watkins*, 1 Harr. & J. 527; *Doe v. Smith*, 3 McLean, 362; *Lewis v. Baird*, 3 McLean, 56; *Kerns v. Swope*, 2 Watts, 75; *Graves v. Graves*, 6 Gray, 391; *Burnham v. Chandler*, 15 Texas, 441; *Boessard v. White*, 9 Rich. Eq. 483; *Galpin v. Abbott*, 6 Mich. 17; *McKean v. Mitchell*, 35 Penn. St. 269; *Dussaume v. Burnett*, 5 Clark (Iowa), 95; *Peck v. Mallams*, 10 N. Y. 518; *Harper v. Barsh*, 10 Rich. Eq. 149; *Ely v. Wilcox*, 30 Wis. 529.

³ *Isham v. Bennington Iron Co.* 19 Verm. 245; *Harper v. Barsh*, 10 Rich. Eq. 149; *Meighen v. Strong*, 6 Miss. 177, a deed not properly witnessed.

⁴ *Harper v. Tapley*, 35 Miss. 510; *Stewart v. McSweeney*, 14 Wis. 468.

⁵ *Beckman v. Frost*, 18 Johns. 544; *Frost v. Beckman*, 1 Johns. Ch. 292. See *Chamberlain v. Bell*, 7 Cal. 292.

veyances, even as to persons ignorant of such unrecorded deed. In Ohio, this is six months for all deeds, with the exception of mortgages, which must be recorded forthwith. But a deed may be recorded after the six months, in which case such record is constructive notice only, from the time of its actually being made.¹ In Kentucky, the time is eight months.² In Mississippi, three. But if the deed is recorded after that, *it is notice from the time of its being registered.³ [*593] In Georgia, the time is twelve months, and if two successive deeds are made of the same land, and neither is recorded within the prescribed time, the recording of the second deed after that time, but prior to the first, does not give it precedence over the first.⁴ But when recorded, though after the expiration of twelve months, it is a notice from the time of its record, but does not relate back to any prior time.⁵ The same rule applies as to the effect of a record made in South Carolina.⁶ While in Pennsylvania, where the time is six months, in a case like the last, if the second deed were taken without actual notice of the first, and were recorded first, it would give it precedence of the one first executed.⁷ And the same rule applies in Ohio.⁸ The time in New Jersey, as stated in the case cited, is six months, though the deed may be recorded after that, but not so as to effect a subsequent *bona fide* deed, lodged for record before the first is lodged for record. Whereas, if the prior deed is lodged for record before the second, though after the expiration of the six months, it will take precedence of the second.⁹ In Alabama, the time is six months, but if the deed

¹ Walk. Am. Law, 358, 359.

² Applegate v. Gracy, 9 Dana, 217. Mortgages are to be recorded in sixty days.

⁴ Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 445; M'Connell v. Brown, Litt. Sel. Cas. 459, 462; Dale v. Arnold, 2 Bibb, 605.

⁵ McRaven v. McGuire, 9 S. & M. 34.

⁶ Thornt. Conv. 157; Doe v. Reddin, Dudl. (Ga.) 177; Martin v. Williams, 27 Ga. 406.

⁸ Helms v. O'Bannon, 26 Ga. 132; Anderson v. Dugas, 29 Ga. 440.

⁶ Leger v. Doyle, 11 Rich. (Law), 109; Belk v. Massey, Ib. 614.

⁷ Lightner v. Mooney, 10 Watts, 407. Mortgages in sixty days. 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 445; Poth v. Anstatt, 4 Watts & S. 307; Berg v. Shipley, 1 Grant, Cas. 429; Souder v. Morrow, 33 Penn. St. 83.

⁸ Northrup v. Brehmer, 8 Ohio, 392.

⁹ Den v. Richman, 1 Green, 43. The time is said to be reduced to fifteen days by the statute of 1820. 4 Kent, Com. 457, note.

is recorded afterwards, it is notice from the time of the record.¹ The times allowed for recording deeds in Delaware, Tennessee, and Indiana, are twelve, in Virginia, eight, and in Maryland, North and South Carolina, six months.² In Massachusetts, in determining the question of precedence between a purchaser or mortgagee, and a creditor, no time is allowed for the former, in which to record his deed.³

57. In some States, a deed requires to be acknowledged, and the acknowledgment certified thereon, in order to its operating to pass a title. This is the case in Ohio, and where the certificate left the name of the grantor blank, it was [*594] held *that it was not competent to supply the defect by parol evidence.⁴ But a deed may convey a title as against the grantor and his heirs, though not acknowledged so as to be admitted to record.⁵ But in South Carolina, Alabama, and Indiana, a mortgage signed by a married woman is not binding upon her, unless properly acknowledged by her, and this acknowledgment must be properly certified.⁶

58. In some of the States, if a deed is properly admitted to record, it may be used in evidence without any further proof in the first place, as the courts will presume that all the circumstances necessary to give validity to the instrument have been complied with. The States in which this is true, are New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Illinois, Mississippi, California, Kansas, Texas, Delaware, Wisconsin, Kentucky, and Missouri.⁷ But in the other States, the deed must be proved, as at common law, in order to be used by the holder in evidence in questions involving the validity of the deed.⁷ In Maryland, the enrol-

¹ *Mallory v. Stodder*, 6 Ala. 801. If to secure the debt, the time is three months. *Thornt. Conv.* 75.

² 4 Kent, Com. 457.

³ *Cushing v. Hurd*, 4 Pick. 252, 256.

⁴ *Smith v. Hunt*, 13 Ohio, 260, 268.

⁵ *Blain v. Stewart*, 2 Iowa, 383; *Gibbs v. Swift*, 12 Cush. 393; *Ricks v. Reed*, 19 Cal. 571. See also *Doe v. Naylor*, 2 Blackf. 32.

⁶ 5 Stat. 257; *Bruce v. Perry*, 11 Rich. 121; *McBryde v. Wilkinson*, 29 Ala. 663; *Perdue v. Aldridge*, 19 Ind. 290.

⁷ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 299, note; *Hutchison v. Rust*, 2 Gratt. 394; *Young v. Ringo*, 1 Mon. 30; *Toulmin v. Austin*, 5 Stew. & P. 410; *Ball v. McCawley*, 29 Ga. 355; *Clark v. Troy*, 20 Cal. 219; *Houghton v. Jones*, 1 Wall. (U. S.) 702; *Doe v.*

ment of a deed of bargain and sale, is evidence of a title, without producing the original, in the trial of an ejectment.¹ In several of the States, where it becomes necessary to make out a party's title, through deeds between other persons than the immediate parties to his own deed, courts admit in evidence the original records or certified copies of recorded deeds, without requiring any further authentication thereof by witnesses.²

59. In some of the States, in which, as will be more fully stated, an unrecorded deed, if known to a subsequent purchaser, will be valid and effectual as to him, will not be so as against creditors, although known to them. To give a purchaser preference over a creditor, it requires that his deed should be recorded. Such is the case in Tennessee,³ Kentucky,⁴ and Virginia.⁵

60. With the few exceptions above referred to, the proposition may be regarded as applicable to all the States, that actual notice has the same effect in determining the right of precedence between persons claiming under different deeds from the same grantor, as a record thereof regularly made would itself have. The question of priority of rights arising from a priority of record of two or more deeds, arises, properly, between those from the grantor.⁶ And in order that one whose deed is prior in record, but subsequent in date, to another, should claim precedence of right thereby, he must show that he is a purchaser for a consideration actually paid; the recital of such payment in the deed is not enough.⁷ If two deeds of the same land have been made and recorded, and one only has been delivered, the latter takes precedence in point of time.

Prettyman, 1 *Houst. (Del.)* 339; *Simpson v. Mundee*, 3 *Kans.* 181; *Younge v. Guilbeau*, 3 *Wall. (U. S.)* 640; *Hinchliff v. Hinman*, 18 *Wis.* 135; *Landers v. Bolton*, 26 *Cal.* 405.

¹ *Hurn v. Soper*, 6 *Harr. & J.* 276, 280.

² *Dixon v. Doe*, 5 *Blackf.* 106; *Scanlan v. Wright*, 13 *Pick.* 523; *Ward v. Fuller*, 15 *Pick.* 185; *Eaton v. Campbell*, 7 *Pick.* 10; *Farrar v. Fessenden*, 39 *N. H.* 268; *Harvey v. Mitchell*, 11 *Foster (N. H.)*, 582; *Cogan v. Frisby*, 36 *Miss.* 178.

³ *Washington v. Trousdale*, *Mart. & Y.* 385, 391; *Lillard v. Rucker*, 9 *Yerg.* 64, 73.

⁴ *Edwards v. Brinker*, 9 *Dana*, 69; *Ring v. Gray*, 6 *B. Mon.* 368, 374.

⁵ *Guerrant v. Anderson*, 4 *Rand.* 208.

⁶ *Long v. Dollarhide*, 24 *Cal.* 227.

⁷ *Watkins v. Edwards*, 23 *Tex.* 447; *Boone v. Chiles*, 10 *Peters*, 211.

over the other.¹ And in Pennsylvania the record of a deed is not notice to a stranger, unless it is also indexed.² If the grantee in a second deed which is recorded knew of a prior unrecorded deed when he took it, the latter will take precedence of the former, though the real purchaser and the one who paid the consideration and had the deed made to such grantee, did not know of the prior deed.³ If one when he purchases knows that his grantor has no title, he cannot set up his deed against the real owner, although he did not know who he was when he took his deed.⁴ And to give one a precedence as a *bona fide* purchaser, he must not only not have notice of a prior title when he purchases, but when he pays the consideration also. If he pays after such knowledge had, he cannot claim the rights of a *bona fide* purchaser.⁵ And between the parties and against the heirs or devisees of the grantor, an unrecorded deed is as effectual to pass a title as one duly registered.

And this extends to creditors and subsequent purchasers, who are bound in the same manner, if they have actual notice. Out of the numerous cases sustaining these propositions, a few only have been selected, to illustrate its application in different States.⁶ And where there are several grantees, notice to one of them, when he takes the deed, is notice to all.⁷

¹ *Parmelee v. Simpson*, 5 Wall. (U. S.) 81. ² *Speer v. Evans*, 47 Penn. 144.

³ *Murphy v. Nathans*, 46 Penn. St. 512.

⁴ *Fitzhugh v. Barnard*, 12 Mich. 110.

⁵ *Blanchard v. Tyler*, 12 Mich. 339.

⁶ *Alabama*, *Ohio Life Insurance Co. v. Ledyard*, 8 Ala. 866; *Wells v. Morrow*, 38 Ala. 125.—*Illinois*, *Doe v. Reed*, 4 Scamm. 117; *Doe v. Reed*, 2 Scamm. 371.—*Indiana*, *Givan v. Doe*, 7 Blackf. 210; *Doe v. Beardsley*, 2 McLean, 421.—*Iowa*, *Hopping v. Burnam*, 2 Greene, 39, 48.—*Kentucky*, *Applegate v. Gracy*, 9 Dana, 224; *Boling v. Ewing*, Id. 76.—*Maine*, *Nason v. Grant*, 21 Me. 160.—*Massachusetts*, *Trull v. Bigelow*, 16 Mass. 406, 418; *Flynt v. Arnold*, 2 Met. 622.—*Mississippi*, *Dixon v. Doe*, 1 S. & M. 70.—*New Hampshire*, *Rogers v. Jones*, 8 N. H. 264; *Wark v. Willard*, 13 N. H. 389.—*New Jersey*, *Den v. Richman*, 1 Green, 43.—*New York*, *Schutt v. Large*, 6 Barb. 373; *Jackson v. Leek*, 19 Wend. 339.—*Ohio*, *Irvin v. Smith*, 17 Ohio, 226.—*South Carolina*, *Martin v. Quattlebam*, 3 McCord, 205.—*Tennessee*, *Lillard v. Rucker*, 9 Yerg. 64, 73.—*Vermont*, *Corliss v. Corliss*, 8 Verm. 373.—*Virginia*, *Turner v. Stip*, 1 Wash. 319. See also *Sicard v. Davis*, 6 Pet. 124; *Van Rensselaer v. Clark*, 17 Wend. 25; *Swan v. Moore*, 14 La. An. 833; *Morrison v. Kelly*, 22 Ill. 610; *Burkhalter v. Ector*, 25 Ga. 55; *Miller v. Chittenden*, 2 Clarke (Iowa), 315; *Blain v. Stewart*, Id. 378; *Ricks v. Reed*, 19 Cal. 571.

⁷ *Stanley v. Green*, 12 Cal. 148.

61. As a deduction from these principles, if one purchases of another who holds a recorded deed, he will acquire thereby a precedence over one holding a prior unrecorded deed, of which he was not cognizant, although the holder of such recorded deed knew of the existence of such prior deed when he took his own, and could not himself have claimed any precedence. But if the holder of the earlier deed have it recorded, before the holder of a deed of a later date but an earlier record, shall have actually conveyed the estate to another, though he is ignorant of such earlier deed, the record would be constructive notice to such purchaser from the holder of the later deed, and defeat his precedence of title.¹

62. The certificate which an officer, taking the acknowledgment of a deed, is required to make upon the deed if it is in proper form, is received as evidence of its own genuineness, without its first being shown affirmatively by whom the certificate is made.² But still, the act of taking and certifying an acknowledgment of a deed is a ministerial and not a judicial one, and he may, moreover, be required to testify as to facts bearing upon the capacity of the maker of the deed to execute it.³ And if he omit to insert the requisite facts in his certificate, so as to make the record valid, he may render himself liable in damages for such neglect.⁴ But a certificate that a married woman acknowledged that she freely, &c. *executed* a deed, was held to be equivalent to saying that she signed, sealed, and delivered it, and implies every necessary act to make it valid.⁵ But it is competent to contradict the effect of what it states, as, where the deed was executed and acknowledged before the proper officer, it was held, that it was competent for a party contesting the deed to show with what intent *the grantor acknowledged it, in order to establish that [*596] the deed was only inchoate, and never fully executed

¹ Trull v. Bigelow, 16 Mass. 406, 418; Flynt v. Arnold, 2 Met. 619, 627. See Coffin v. Ray, 1 Met. 212; Adams v. Cuddy, 13 Pick. 460; Hagthorp v. Hook, 1 Gill & J. 270; Boynton v. Rees, 8 Pick. 329.

² Thurman v. Cameron, 24 Wend. 87, 92; Merrick v. Wallace, 19 Ill. 486; Tracy v. Jenks, 15 Pick. 468; Thompson v. Morgan, 6 Minn. 295.

³ Truman v. Lore, 14 Ohio St. 151; ante, *590.

⁴ Fogarty v. Finlay, 10 Cal. 239.

⁵ Smith v. Williams, 38 Miss. 56.

and delivered.¹ It has been held in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and California, that the certificate of acknowledgment of a married woman, made by a magistrate upon a deed, may be controlled or contradicted by evidence.² But in Indiana, such certificate is conclusive evidence.³

63. In regard to the extent to which a purchaser is bound by constructive notice, and what a purchaser by a subsequent deed is presumed to know, the rule is, that the law imputes to such purchaser, a knowledge of all facts relating to the same land, appearing at the time of his purchase, upon the muniments of title which it was necessary for him to inspect in order to ascertain the sufficiency of such title.⁴ And if an ordinarily diligent search would bring to the inquirer a knowledge of a prior incumbrance or alienation, he is presumed to know of them.⁵ Thus, where in the deed of a purchaser under whom a party claimed land through sundry mesne conveyances, a restriction as to building thereon was imposed, but, though mentioned and referred to in several of the intermediate deeds, it was not mentioned in that of the present owner, nor in several of the next preceding mesne conveyances, and the question was, if the present owner was chargeable with notice, the court held, that though he was not shown to have had actual notice, "yet, as the conveyances under which he holds refer to deeds in which it (the restriction) is contained, and these deeds are recorded, he must be taken to have had notice of the existence of such restriction in the original deeds, and of its consequences."⁶

64. Under the head of capacity to make a deed whereby to

¹ *Hutchison v. Rust*, 2 Gratt. 394; ante, *590.

² *Dodge v. Hollinshead*, 6 Minn. 25. See also *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 4 Johns. 161; *Jackson v. Hayner*, 12 Johns. 472; *Annan v. Folsom*, 6 Minn. 500; *Landers v. Bolton*, 26 Cal. 406; *Hall v. Patterson*, 51 Penn. St. 289.

³ *M'Neely v. Rucker*, 6 Blackf. 391.

⁴ *Blackw. Tax Tit.* 84, 85; *Baltimore, &c. v. White*, 2 Gill, 444, 457; *Laussat, Fonbl. Eq.* 518, note; *Jackson v. Livingston*, 10 Johns. 374; *Brush v. Ware*, 15 Pet. 93, 113; *Story, Eq. Jur.* § 403; *Daughaday v. Paine*, 6 Minn. 452, 453; 2 *Spence, Eq.* 757; *Fitzhugh v. Barnard*, 12 Mich. 110; *Mason v. Payne, Walker, Ch.* 459; *Jumel v. Jumel*, 7 Paige, 591; *Harris v. Fly, Ib.* 421; *Moore v. Bennett*, 2 Ch. Cas. 246; *Reeder v. Barr*, 4 Ohio, 446.

⁵ *Flynt v. Arnold*, 2 Met. 619, 625; 4 *Greenl. Cruise, Dig.* 452, note.

⁶ *Gibert v. Peteler*, 38 Barb. 488, 512.

pass a title, may be considered the seisin or want of seisin in the grantor. From an early date, the policy of the law has not admitted of the conveyance, by any one, of a title to land which is in the adverse seisin and possession of another. This is considered not as passing a title, but as the transfer of a right of action in violation of the early laws against champerty and maintenance, and, therefore, not to be sustained by the courts. The statute upon this subject is 32 Hen. VIII. c. 9. And the doctrine above laid down is in accordance with that of the civil law, which "forbids a thing which is litigious to be alienated."¹ But by such a deed, the grantor does not lose his seisin and an action will lie in the name of the grantor to recover the land. The title to the land is unaffected by the transaction.² The doctrine is extended to mortgages. If the mortgagee is disseised he cannot assign his mortgage.³ And until the law was altered in Maine by statute, a disseisin of the mortgagor rendered his deed void, as well as an assignment by the mortgagee.⁴ In Indiana, a deed by one while disseised is void against the one in possession, not upon the ground of champerty or maintenance, but by force of early and uniform usage.⁵ In Vermont, a deed under such circumstances is void as to strangers, but good between the parties to it, and is good in equity.⁶ But it is always in the power of the disseisee to make a good deed of the premises, by making an entry upon the land and then delivering his deed.⁷ The effect of a disseisin by construction upon the disseisee's right to convey, by reason of the disseisor being in under color of title, seems to be this: if he enters under a deed which he believes to be a valid one to convey title, he will be so far in possession of all the land described in his deed, that the owner would be disseised and could not convey till he regained his seisin by entry. But if the deed under which he holds is void, and he knows it, the owner would be no further

¹ *Ayliff*, 245.

² *Brinley v. Whiting*, 5 Pick. 348, 355; *Barry v. Adams*, 3 Allen, 493; *Loud v. Darling*, 7 Allen, 206; *Kincaid v. Meadows*, 3 Head, 192; *Shortall v. Hinckley*, 31 Ill. 219.

³ *Dadmun v. Lamson*, 9 Allen, 88.

⁴ *Williams v. Baker*, 49 Me. 428.

⁵ *Webb v. Thompson*, 23 Ind. 432.

⁶ *Park v. Pratt*, 38 Verm. 553; *White v. Fuller*, 38 Verm. 204.

⁷ *Warner v. Bull*, 13 Met. 4.

disseised than the actual possession and occupation extends of him who enters under such a deed.¹ With a wise regard for the peace and protection of titles, this principle has been generally adopted as the law of the several States, although a different rule prevails in some of them. Among the States where this principle of law has been held to prevail, are New York, North Carolina, Vermont, Indiana, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Michigan,² Georgia, and Mississippi.³ But the [*597] principle applies only as to *the one holding adversely at the time the deed is made, and those claiming under him. As to all the rest of the world, the deed would be valid and effectual.⁴ And this further effect would follow from such conveyance, that though no title is thereby created in the grantee, as against the tenant holding adverse possession, and the original title remains in the grantor, still he holds it as trustee for the use of his grantee, so far that his grantee may sue for possession of the land in the grantor's name, and the possession, when thus gained, enures to the benefit of the grantee.⁵ There are exceptions to the rule as to the effect of adverse possession upon the validity of a deed, among which is the case of the State granting lands. As the State cannot be disseised, no adverse possession can affect its right to convey its lands.⁶ Nor does such possession affect the validity of a sale under a judi-

¹ *Livingston v. Peru Iron Co.* 9 Wend. 511, 522, 523; *Moore v. Worley*, 24 Ind. 83.

² *Co. Lit.* 214 a; *Lalor, Real Prop.* 253; *Den v. Shearer*, 1 Murph. 114; *Hoyle v. Logan*, 4 Dev. 495; *Thurman v. Cameron*, 24 Wend. 87; *Ewing v. Savary*, 4 Bibb, 424; *Hathorne v. Haines*, 1 Ma. 238; *Dame v. Wingate*, 12 N. H. 291; *Graham v. Webb*, 29 Ga. 320; *Helms v. May*, *Ib.* 121; *Betsey v. Torrance*, 34 Miss. 132; *Parker v. Proprietors, &c.* 3 Met. 98; *Galbreath v. Doe*, 8 Blackf. 366; *Wade v. Lindsey*, 6 Met. 407, 414; *Selleck v. Starr*, 6 Verm. 198; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Doug. (Mich.) 546. As to the character of adverse possession which renders a deed void, *Foxcroft v. Barnes*, 29 Me. 128.

³ *Helms v. May*, 29 Ga. 124.

⁴ *Livingston v. Peru Iron Co.* 9 Wend. 511, 523; *Livingston v. Prosens*, 2 Hill, 526; *Edwards v. Roys*, 18 Verm. 473; *Wade v. Lindsey*, 6 Met. 407, 414; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Doug. (Mich.) 546; *Betsey v. Torrance*, 34 Miss. 132; *University of Vermont v. Joslyn*, 21 Verm. 61.

⁵ *Wade v. Lindsey*, 6 Met. 413, 414; *Betsey v. Torrance*, 34 Miss. 132, 139; *Livingston v. Peru Iron Co.* 9 Wend. 523; *Stockton v. Williams*, 1 Doug. (Mich.) 567; *Jackson v. Leggett*, 7 Wend. 380; *Wilson v. Nance*, 11 Humph. 191; *Edwards v. Parkhurst*, 21 Verm. 472.

⁶ *People v. Mayor, &c.* 28 Barb. 240; *Ward v. Bartholomew*, 6 Pick. 402.

cial decree, or by a public officer acting in that capacity.¹ The possession of a tenant holding over, is not so adverse to his lessor as to render his deed of the estate invalid.² Among the States where a conveyance of lands, though in the adverse possession of another, will pass the grantor's title as a valid deed, are Pennsylvania, Maine, Illinois, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and Ohio.³

65. In Ohio, a deed is valid though made on Sunday.⁴ It would be void in Indiana, if delivered on that day. But it may be good, though made on that day, if delivered upon another day.⁵ A deed given by the way of composition of a felony, cannot be avoided for that reason by the grantor. But a deed obtained by duress of imprisonment, may be avoided by the grantor or his heirs, by a re-entry upon the premises.⁶

66. There is a class of conveyances of lands which, though formal in all respects, and effectual between the parties, are, by the policy of the law or by statute, held to be void to a certain extent. This embraces what are known as fraudulent conveyances, where the intent of the parties to the same is to defraud the creditors or the subsequent purchasers of the grantor, by means of such conveyance. The questions arising under these are usually referred to the statutes of 13 Eliz. ch. 5, and 27 Eliz. ch. 4, though these are said to be in affirmance of the common law, and, in one form or the other, prevail all over the United States. The first of these statutes relates to creditors, and provides, in general terms, that all conveyances of lands intended to defraud or delay creditors, shall, as to such creditors, be void.⁷ But in order to be fraudulent as to creditors, it must be a conveyance of something which is subject to be levied

¹ *Hanna v. Renfro*, 32 Miss. 130; *Frizzle v. Veach*, 1 Dana, 211, 216; *Jarrett v. Tomlinson*, 3 W. & S. 114.

² *Taylor v. Kelly*, 3 Jones, Eq. 340.

³ *Cresson v. Miller*, 2 Watts, 272; *Hall v. Ashby*, 9 Ohio, 96; *Bennet v. Williams*, 5 Ohio, 461; Maine, Rev. Stat. c. 73, § 1; *Shortall v. Hinckley*, 31 Ill. 219; *Stewart v. McSweeney*, 14 Wis. 471; *Poyas v. Wilkins*, 12 Rich. 420.

⁴ *Swisher v. Williams, Wright (Ohio)*, 754. See *Tracy v. Jenks*, 15 Pick. 465.

⁵ *Love v. Wells*, 25 Ind. 506.

⁶ *Worcester v. Eaton*, 11 Mass. 368; s. c. 13 Mass. 371.

⁷ *Barton, Real Prop.* §§ 221-228; *Story, Eq.* §§ 352-356; *Sands v. Codwise*, 4 Johns. 536, 559; 1 Am. Lead. Cas. 68; *Penniman v. Cole*, 8 Met. 499; *Coolidge v. Melvin*, 42 N. H. 525.

upon for debt. If, therefore, a debtor, with ever so fraudulent intent in respect to his creditors, convey what the law exempts as a homestead, it could not be avoided on that account.¹ As the question in these cases depends upon the *bona fides* with which the transaction takes place, it would be transcending the purposes of this work to attempt to present, in detail, the cases wherein the questions considered related to what should be deemed evidence of good or bad faith. A few general principles may, however, be properly stated. In the first place, such conveyance, though fraudulent, is, if otherwise sufficient, and for a valuable consideration, valid as to all innocent purchasers not privy to the fraudulent intent. Thus, if a fraudulent grantee conveys the estate to a *bona fide* purchaser, for a valuable consideration, the conveyance is good, and the first grant may be purged of the fraud.² So, though the grantor makes the conveyance with a fraudulent intent, it will not affect the validity of the transaction unless the grantee was cognizant of his intent, or participated in it.³ And though the design be originally fraudulent, as to creditors, and known to the grantee, so as to be void as to creditors so long as the transactions had that character, yet it may become valid by being purged of the fraud by matter *ex post facto*, if the fraudulent intent is abandoned.⁴ But if vendor and vendee participate in the purpose of the vendor, to defraud or delay creditors, by conveying his land, it will be void as to such creditors, though a full and valuable consideration may have been paid for the same.⁵ In respect to conveyances that are voluntary, that is, made without a valuable consideration, the cases are very numerous, but not uniform. And it may be remarked in passing, that the consideration of marriage, or an express promise to marry, if the marriage ultimately be prevented by the death of the gran-

¹ Wood v. Chambers, 20 Tex. 254; Dreutzer v. Bell, 11 Wis. 114; Gassett v. Grout, 4 Met. 490; Story, Eq. § 367.

² Oriental Bank v. Haskins, 3 Met. 340; Jackson v. Henry, 10 Johns. 185; *Somes v. Brewer*, 2 Pick. 184, 198. See *Clapp v. Tirrell*, 20 Pick. 247.

³ *Bridge v. Eggleston*, 14 Mass. 250; *Harrison v. Trustees, &c.* 12 Mass. 462; *Carpenter v. Muren*, 42 Barb. 300.

⁴ *Oriental Bank v. Haskins*, 3 Met. 340; *Verplank v. Sterry*, 12 Johns. 552; *Sterry v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 261; *Smyth v. Carlisle*, 17 N. H. 418.

⁵ *Story*, Eq. § 369; *Wright v. Brandis*, 1 Ind. 336; *Ruffing v. Tilton*, 12 Ind. 260.

tor, is regarded in law as a valuable one, and takes the case out of the category of voluntary conveyances.¹ The editors of the American Leading Cases have collected these, accompanied by discriminating comments upon the classes into which they divide themselves. That such conveyances are not void as against subsequent creditors, where no intent exists to defraud such creditors, seems to be admitted law. And if not fraudulent at the time, no subsequent creditors can disturb the title.² And while, as to previous creditors, different courts have applied different degrees of stringency in the rule, it may be laid down as a general proposition, that, if such conveyance be made to any person other than a child, it will be void as to existing creditors, and when made to a child, or as a settlement upon a wife, whether it shall be void or not, depends upon the condition of the grantor as to his ability to pay his debts out of his remaining property at the time of its being made. And it may be added, that such voluntary conveyances are uniformly recognized as valid between the parties and their representatives.³ Thus, a deed by a father to his daughter at his wife's request, in consideration of her having joined with him in conveying her estate, of which he had the benefit, was held good, and, in the absence of an intent to defraud, did not come within the category of voluntary conveyances.⁴ And even cases of voluntary conveyances, for consideration of blood or affection, are only presumptive evidence of fraud, if the grantor be then in debt, which may be rebutted by evidence.⁵ Where the conveyance is made with an actual fraudulent intent, it may be avoided by subsequent as well as previous creditors.⁶ But in

¹ *Smith v. Allen*, 5 Allen, 458; *Sterry v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 261; *Huston v. Cantril*, 11 Leigh, 176; *Prodgers v. Langham*, 1 Sid. 133.

² *Thacher v. Phinney*, 7 Allen, 150.

³ *Sexton v. Wheaton*, 8 Wheat. 229; *Salmon v. Bennett*, 1 Conn. 525; 1 Am. Lead. Cas. 49-85; *Doe v. Hurd*, 7 Blackf. 510; *Bullitt v. Taylor*, 34 Miss. 708, 737, and cases cited in the argument; *Story*, Eq. §§ 362, 364, 371; *Reade v. Livingston*, 3 Johns. Ch. 500, 501; *Hinde's Lessee v. Longworth*, 11 Wheat. 199. See *Washband v. Washband*, 27 Conn. 424, for the distinction between an inadequate and no consideration, in its effect where grantor owes existing debts; in the former the deed will be good, unless made with a fraudulent intent. *Lerow v. Wilmarth*, 9 Allen, 386.

⁴ *Brooks v. Dalrymple*, 12 Allen, 102.

⁵ *Lerow v. Wilmarth*, 9 Allen, 386; *Pomeroy v. Bailey*, 43 N. H. 118.

⁶ *Parkman v. Welch*, 19 Pick. 231. But see *Bullitt v. Taylor*, 34 Miss. 740, 741;

Minnesota, no one can object to a fraudulent conveyance, who was not a creditor at the time it was made.¹ But that a voluntary conveyance, made in good faith, will be good against a subsequent purchaser with notice, seems to be the better rule of law, as now prevailing in the United States, though held otherwise in England. And it would not be good against a subsequent purchaser without notice, if for a valuable consideration.² Another class of conveyances which were good at common law, have been declared fraudulent, by statute, under the doctrine of modern bankrupt and insolvent laws, and that is, conveyances intended to give undue preferences to creditors, and to prevent an equal distribution of a bankrupt's assets among his creditors.³ And it may be added, that, though the deed be voluntary and fraudulent in its intent, it is, nevertheless, valid and effectual against the grantor and his heirs.⁴ It may also be added that, in *Bunn v. Winthrop*, a voluntary deed settling lands, in which the grantor had a chattel interest, upon a natural daughter, was sustained in a court of equity, although, after executing it, but without delivery, the grantor sealed it up with his will, and retained the custody of it till his death.⁵ The court in the first case cited, say: "The instrument is good as a voluntary settlement, though retained by the grantor in his possession until his death." And in the other case, the court say: "A voluntary settlement fairly made is always binding in equity upon the grantor, unless there be a clear and decisive proof that he never parted nor intended to part with the possession of the deed." An important, and what must be, when published, a leading case upon the subject of voluntary conveyances has recently been decided by Bates, Chancellor, in Delaware, in which the question was, whether

Coolidge v. Melvin, 42 N. H. 521, 522; *Herschfeldt v. George*, 6 Mich. 466; *Beach v. White, Walker*, Ch. 496; *Ib.* 437.

¹ *Stone v. Myers*, 9 Minn. 311.

² *Story*, Eq. §§ 427, 428; *Cathcart v. Robinson*, 5 Peters, 264, 280; *Beal v. Warren*, 2 Gray, 447; *Doe v. Rusham*, 17 A. & E. n. s. 724; *Jackson v. Town*, 4 Cow. 603; *Sterry v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 261. See *Upton v. Basset*, Cro. Eliz. 445; *Buckle v. Mitchell*, 18 Ves. 100; *Smith v. Allen*, 5 Allen, 456.

³ *Penniman v. Cole*, 8 Met. 500; *Nary v. Merrill*, 8 Allen, 451; *Mass. Gen. Stat.* ch. 118, § 91.

⁴ *Jackson v. Garnsey*, 16 Johns. 189; *Upton v. Basset*, Cro. Eliz. 445.

⁵ *Bunn v. Winthrop*, 1 Johns. Ch. 329; *Souverbye v. Arden*, 1 Johns. Ch. 255.

equity would interpose and set aside a voluntary conveyance of his estate made by a man in contemplation of marriage and while under a marriage engagement. The Chancellor goes fully and with discrimination into the consideration of the English and American cases, and comes to a clear and satisfactory conclusion that for a man or woman, on the eve of marriage, to convey away his or her estate (in this case it was the entire property of the husband), if done without a valuable consideration, and not disclosed to the other party before the marriage, would be so far a fraud *per se* upon the marital rights of the other party, that equity would set it aside, so far as it conflicted with these rights, although the party, so defrauded, did not know whether the person he or she was about to marry, had been possessed of the property in question or not. In that case the husband having died, the widow and children applied to have the voluntary conveyance, made by him in trust for himself for life, and after his death to go to his sisters, set aside in their favor. The Chancellor held the conveyance void as to her right of dower, but binding upon his children and heirs, and decreed accordingly.¹ And in respect to deeds obtained by duress or fraud at common law, if the party so obtaining a deed, which is duly executed in matter of form, convey the estate to a *bona fide* purchaser, ignorant of the duress or fraud, for a valuable consideration, the latter will hold the estate purged of such fraud or duress.²

67. The instances are numerous where an innocent purchaser will hold an estate as against another owner, although the person of whom he purchased could not have held against such owner. Thus, if one purchase an estate of one who holds a recorded deed, and was not cognizant of a prior unrecorded deed, he holds by a good title, and may convey it even to one who was cognizant of such deed.³ But if one, having made a deed of land which is unrecorded, make a second one which is recorded, to one who was cognizant of the first, and

¹ *Chandler v. Hollingsworth*.

² *Somes v. Brewer*, 2 Pick. 184, 203; *Worcester v. Eaton*, 11 Mass. 379; *Deputy v. Stapleford*, 19 Cal. 302.

³ *Bumpus v. Platner*, 1 Johns. Ch. 219; *Story, Eq.* § 410; *Bell v. Twilight*, 18 N. H. 159; *Harrison v. Forth*, Prec. Chanc. 51; *Lowther v. Carlton*, 2 Atk. 139; *Trull v. Bigelow*, 16 Mass. 406.

the holder of the first deed gets the same recorded before the holder of the second has conveyed the estate, whoever purchases of the second, will be bound by the record of the first deed, and cannot claim the rights of an innocent purchaser, without notice.¹

SECTION III.

WHAT PROPERTY MUST BE CONVEYED BY DEED.

It only remains, while considering the constituent elements of a deed as a means of creating a title by private grant, to inquire what is embraced under "a thing to be contracted for," one of the requisites, as given by Lord Coke, in the passage already cited.² In other words, in the conveyance of what property is a deed necessary, and to what property does it apply?

It will be borne in mind, that the former distinction, as to the necessity of a deed, between what lies in livery and what lies in grant, has, at last, been practically abolished in [*598] England, by the *statute of 8 and 9 Vict. ch. 106, § 2, and was never in force in this country. Since the statute of frauds, 29 Charles II. ch. 3. A. D. 1676, a deed has been required, in order to convey a freehold interest "in, to, or out of any messuages, manors, lands, tenements, or hereditaments."³

The subject of what property lies in grant, and requires a deed to create or transfer a title to it, was minutely considered by the early writers, to some of whom reference is here made, rather by way of example and illustration, than with a view of giving a complete summary of what may and must be so conveyed. It is laid down as a proposition, having few, and only special exceptions, that such things as lie in grant, and not in livery, generally cannot be granted or given without deed. And therefore rents and services, and such like things, which are in gross, and not incident to some other thing, may not be granted without deed.⁴

¹ *Flynt v. Arnold*, 2 Met. 619.

² Co. Lit. 35 b; ante, pp. *553, *554.

³ *Browne, Stat. Frauds*, § 6.

⁴ *Shep. Touch.* 230; 1 *Wood, Conv.* 176, 177.

Whatever it requires a deed to create at first, requires a deed to transfer from one grantee to another, and the same is true in respect to surrenders. As in the case of a conveyance, or surrender of an existing rent charge, or rent seck.¹ Remainders and reversions in fee, or for life, are grantable only by deed, and can be surrendered only by deed.² A grant by deed, of an acre of land, covered by water, would be good.³ So a grant of a way, either *de novo*, or of one already existing, must be by deed.⁴ But a mere license to do something upon another's land, like hunting or walking upon it, is not the subject of a grant by one to another, unless it be a license to take the property in another's land, which cannot pass without a deed.⁵ It may be added, in general terms, that every easement or servitude in lands, being an interest therein, can be acquired only by grant, or what is deemed to be evidence of an original grant. And in this are embraced rights in one man to take away the soil, or profits of the soil of another, called *profit à prendre*, if such right be of a freehold or inheritable character.⁶ In the matter of water, the owner of the bed of a stream may grant a certain quantity of water to be taken out of it, or a certain amount of water power measured and ascertained. But if the grant be of a *water power*, it can only be taken or used for the propulsion of machinery.⁷

A man may grant trees growing on his own land, without deed. So he may corn on the ground, or fruit upon trees, *standing on his land, although these may not [*599] have been severed. And the same is true of the timber, stone, or other materials of a house, then standing upon his estate, and the donee, in such a case, may take it away after the donor's death. The law regards these things as so much of the character of chattels, as not to require the formality of a deed, to pass property in them.⁸ But the grant of

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 175, 185; Bennet v. Westbeck, Poph. 137; Shep. Touch. 229.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 177, 178; Perkins, § 61; Co. Lit. 338, a; 2 Rolle, Abr. 62, Grant, 6; Shep. Touch. 230.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 176; Co. Lit. 4.

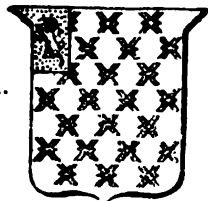
⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 177; Beandely v. Brook, Cro. Jac. 189.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 182; Perkins, 98; Monk v. Butler, Cro. Jac. 574.

⁶ Washburn, Easements, 18, and cases cited.

⁷ McDonald v. Askew, 29 Cal. 207.

⁸ 1 Wood, Conv. 179; 3 Id. 16, note; Perkins, §§ 57, 59; Shep. Touch. 231.



the vesture of land, such as the herbage, and the like, can only be made by deed.¹ In speaking of deeds above, no distinction is made between an indenture and a deed poll, as a means of conveyance, the form, in that respect, being immaterial.² Another familiar principle is applicable to surrenders, or revocations of grants, namely, that they must be of as high a nature as the instrument, by which the interests granted were created, so that if any interest is created by deed, it must be surrendered or revoked by deed.³

But every right is not the subject of grant, though it relates to land, or an interest therein. Thus, a bare possibility of an interest which is uncertain, is not grantable, though a possibility, coupled with a present interest, may be granted.⁴ It has accordingly been held, that a grant by an heir apparent of his interest in his ancestor's estate, so long as his ancestor is living, conveys nothing, and is inoperative.⁵ But where an heir apparent who was indebted to another, assigned his interest in his ancestor's estate, with a power of attorney to make deeds, &c. necessary to receive the proceeds, it was held to give him such an interest that equity protected it against the claim of a creditor of the heir who attached the estate, at the ancestor's death.⁶ So is a grant by a soldier of such land as may thereafter be given him by the government as a bounty.⁷ It must be an interest in the land existing in possession, reversion, remainder, by executory devise, or contingent remainder.⁸ An exception to this exists in many cases, where the grant is with a covenant of warranty, which would create an estate in

But see *Trull v. Fuller*, 28 Me. 545, and ante, p. *573, that a deed is necessary to convey a fixture, like a shingle-mill. *Clafin v. Carpenter*, 4 Met. 580; *Smith v. Sarman*, 9 B. & C. 561; *Evans v. Roberts*, 5 B. & C. 829; *Whitmarsh v. Walker*, 1 Met. 313. But see *Rodwell v. Phillips*, 9 M. & W. 501; and *Green v. Armstrong*, 1 Denio, 550; *M'Gregor v. Brown*, 10 N. Y. 117, that a sale of standing trees can only be by writing, and not by parol.

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 179, cites *Noy*, 54.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 185.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 182, 185; *Fulwood's case*, 4 Rep. 66; in *Thomas Palmer's case*, 5 Rep. 24 b; *Jackson v. Catlin*, 2 Johns. 261.

⁵ *Davis v. Hayden*, 9 Mass. 519; *Dart v. Dart*, 7 Conn. 255; *Bayler v. Commonwealth*, 40 Penn. St. 37; *Lit. § 446*; *Co. Lit. 265 a*.

⁶ *Stover v. Eycleshimer*, 46 Barb. 84.

⁷ *Jackson v. Wright*, 14 Johns. 193.

⁸ *Jackson v. Catlin*, 2 Johns. 261.

the grantee by estoppel, whenever the grantor shall have acquired the estate which he has granted and warranted.¹ So no possibility, right, or title to land in action, can be granted to a stranger, though it may be released to the tenant, by deed; nor, generally, are things in action, as rights and titles of entry or action concerning inheritances, grantable, except in special cases; as, for instance, if one be disseised, he may not grant the land, or a right of action to recover it. Nor can one who has a right to defeat a freehold granted to another, upon failure to perform a condition, grant over this right to a stranger, except in such cases as the benefit of the condition passes with the reversion.² And yet, a deed by one who has a right of entry for condition broken, at common law, though it will not pass any right to his grantee to enter and defeat the estate, will so far extinguish his own, that his heir could not enter for such breach. And if the grant were by the ancestor to the heir himself, the right of entry to defeat the original estate would be extinguished altogether.³

¹ Ante, pp. *473, *474; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 121; Co. Lit. 265 a.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 183; Perkins, § 86; *Lampet's case*, 10 Rep. 51; Lit. § 347; Co. Lit. 214 a, 214 b; *Shep. Touch.* 231.

³ *Rice v. Boston & W. Railroad*, 12 Allen, 141.

CHAPTER V.

FORMS OF CONVEYANCE BY PRIVATE GRANT.

- SECT. 1. Deeds at Common Law and their Characteristics.
- SECT. 2. Deeds under the Statute of Uses.
- SECT. 3. Deeds in Use in the United States.
- SECT. 4. Component Parts of Deeds.
- SECT. 5. Covenants in Deeds.

[*603]

*SECTION I.

DEEDS AT COMMON LAW AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS.

- 1. Of deeds of feoffment, and when first required.
- 2. Effect of feoffment in passing a title and estate.
- 3. Early forms of deeds of feoffment.
- 4. Of conveyance by grant.
- 5. Effect of grant and feoffment on title of others.
- 6. Grant not limited to incorporeal hereditaments.

1. IN considering the forms of deeds used in this country to effectuate private grants of lands, it may be well to recapitulate briefly the names and general characteristics of those of England, which have, to a greater or less extent, been adopted as modes of conveyance in this country. So much, however, has already been said of the doctrine of seisin, and livery of seisin at common law, as well as of uses and the forms of conveyance to which the statute of uses gave rise, that it would be little more than repetition to attempt to analyze or give in detail, the grounds upon which these various forms of conveyance originally depended for their adoption and use. The form employed for ages in England, until the Statute of Uses, and which continued to be one of the modes of conveyance there until a comparatively recent period, was that of feoffment. It did not require any deed until the time of Charles II., and consisted of a gift of a feud, evidenced and consummated by an

[638]

actual or symbolical livery of seisin. It, of course, applied to corporeal hereditaments, or such incorporeal hereditaments as remainders or reversions, where the seisin which perfects the estate, is committed to the holder of the particular estate as a kind of bailiff of the reversioner or remainder-man. It was always incumbent upon the feoffor, to indicate, in his gift, the nature and duration of the estate which he intended to give the *feoffee in the lands, and if no estate was [*604] limited therein, it was, constructively, an estate for the life of the feoffee. In carrying out the intention of the parties to the feoffment, it became customary to make written deeds, expressing the terms of the gift, though these did not obviate the necessity of livery of seisin. But the possession of a deed by one purporting to be grantee of an estate, is no evidence of title in the grantor, unless shown *aliunde* to have been, at some time, in possession of the land granted, or his ownership is shown by some other evidence.¹

A conveyance by "gift," is simply a feoffment, wherein the estate thereby limited or created, is one in tail.² This is applying the term in its stricter sense, for in its broader meaning, the word *gift* imports no more than the transferring of the property of a thing from one to another, without a valuable consideration.³

2. The effect of a conveyance by feoffment was, that as it passed the actual seisin, if it proposed to convey a fee-simple, it created an actual fee-simple in the feoffee, by right or by wrong, according as the feoffor was or was not seised in fee. Thus the feoffment, even of an idiot or lunatic, was held effectual till avoided by process of law. The effect upon contingent remainders of a feoffment made by him who had the particular estate, has been heretofore considered. It was to do away with this form of conveyance, as a means of injuriously affecting the rights of third parties, that a recent statute in England has declared, that no feoffment shall have any tortious operation.⁴

3. The deed or charter of feoffment was, originally, exceedingly brief and simple, as the reader may perceive by recurring

¹ Smith v. Lawrence, 12 Mich. 434.

² 2 Bl. Com. 310-317.

³ 3 Wood, Conv. 1.

⁴ Stat. 8 & 9 Vict. ch. 106, § 3; Wms. Real Prop. 121, 122; 4 Kent, Com. 481.

to appendix No. 1, to the second volume of Blackstone's Commentaries.¹

4. Conveyance by grant was the common-law mode of transferring or creating estates or interests in incorporeal hereditaments, of which there could be no livery of seisin. This was always by deed, and these interests passed only by a delivery of the deed. And such is the law now. Thus, a right to take coal or timber from one's land, or any easement in or over his land, being an interest in the land, can be effectually created or conveyed only by deed.² The difference between these two modes of conveyance gave rise to the expression with reference to the two classes of property, one "lying in livery," the other, "in grant." The words made use of in a grant, in creating or passing the estate, differed but little from those employed in a feoffment, and the two modes varied from each other only in the subject-matter of the conveyance. By the statute [*605] above cited, it is now declared *that the conveyance of an immediate estate of freehold in corporeal hereditaments, shall be deemed to lie in *grant* as well as *livery*.³

5. One essential difference between a feoffment and a grant, has already been referred to, namely, their effect upon the interests of third persons, since grants cannot, like feoffments, create a tortious fee, but operate only upon the estate or interest which the grantor has in the thing conveyed, and can lawfully convey.⁴ A feoffment visibly operated upon the *possession*; a grant could only operate on the *right* of the party conveying. As *possession* and *freehold* were convertible terms at the common law, a conveyance which was considered as transferring the possession, was considered as transferring an estate of freehold, or as transferring the fee. But as grants only transferred a right, a conveyance of this kind could only transfer whatever estate the party had a right to convey. It is in this sense, that a feoffment is said to be a tortious, and a grant to be a *rightful* conveyance.⁵ And where "give and grant" are followed by "bargained and sold," it qualifies the

¹ See 4 Kent, Com. 480.

² Huff v. McCauley, 53 Penn. St. 206; Drake v. Wells, 11 Allen, 143.

³ 2 Sharsw. Bl. Com. 317, and note.

⁴ 4 Kent, Com. 490.

⁵ Co. Lit. 271 b; n. by Butler, § 1.

mode of gift and grant, and converts it into bargain and sale, without its being a feoffment.¹

6. Grant is no longer confined to the conveyance of incorporeal hereditaments, and the term has been applied, by statute in New York, to the forms of deeds adopted there, though retaining, in all but name, the characteristics of the deeds previously in use in that State.² In New York, "grant" embraces conveyances of the inheritance of freehold and deeds of bargain and sale. In Vermont, it applies to all conveyances by deed, except those of gift, and in New Jersey, it means every ordinary mode of acquiring property by deed, including such as operate by way of uses.³ And Wood, in his treatise on conveyancing, says: "The word *grant*, taken largely, is where anything is granted or passed from one to another. And in this sense it comprehends feoffments, bargains and sales, gifts, leases in writing or by deed, and, sometimes, by word without writing.⁴ Nor does the calling an instrument a lease, affect the quantity of estate conveyed by it, although it is usually applied to a term for years. It may convey a fee.⁵

SECTION II.

DEEDS UNDER THE STATUTE OF USES.

1. How the law gives effect to such deeds.
2. Difference between bargain and sale, and covenant to stand seized.
3. Mode of operation of lease and release.
4. Form and effect of "quitclaim" deeds.
5. English forms of deeds may be used here.

1. The forms of conveyance which took their rise from the construction given to the Statute of Uses, were considered at length in their character and effect, in the chapter treating of Uses, to which the reader is referred.⁶ The names of these, it

¹ *Matthews v. Ward's Lessee*, 10 Gill & J. 448.

² *4 Kent*, Com. 491; *Cornish, Purch. Deeds*, 208.

³ *Ross v. Adams*, 4 Dutch. 165.

⁴ *3 Wood*, Conv. 7.

⁵ *Jamaica Pond v. Chandler*, 9 Allen, 168.

⁶ *Ante*, pp. *127 - *156; *Bedell's case*, 7 Co. 40 b.

will be recollected, were Bargain and Sale, Covenant to stand seised, and Lease and Release. They all dispense with an actual livery of seisin, and, while they all recognize a seisin as essential to give effect to the conveyance, the statute transfers this, and *executes the use* by uniting the legal seisin with the equitable use, and thereby creating an entire legal estate of the two.

2. The difference theoretically, between a bargain and sale and a covenant to stand seised, consisted in the consideration [*606] out of which the use was raised to which the law united the seisin. In bargain and sale, it required this to be money, or something representing money. In covenant to stand seised, it consisted of relationship by consanguinity or affinity, though, as will hereafter appear, this distinction seems to have been sometimes lost sight of by the courts.

3. In a lease and release, the transfer of the seisin and estate from the grantor to the grantee was by a bargain and sale for a year, for instance, for some valuable consideration, whereby a use for that time was raised in the bargainee, and the statute passed to him the legal possession of the land, and then by a release from the owner of the reversion, which did not require a formal livery of seisin. This last had to be done by deed, being a simple common-law conveyance of a reversion. Both the lease and release were known to and in use under the common law. But for the latter to become operative, it had to be made to one having an estate in or possession of the land, while a lease, before entry under it, created no estate in the lessee, but a mere *interesse termini*, as it was called. So that this mode of conveyance by lease and release, derived its vital energy and effect from the possession which the law, under the statute of uses, gave to the lessee or bargainee for the year, thereby rendering him capable of acquiring the inheritance by a simple deed of release.* It, consequently,

* NOTE. — In treating of the application of the doctrine of uses to conveyances by lease and release, in an earlier part of this work (ante, p. *130), the remarks were confined to the simplest form of such a conveyance, where it is intended that the seisin and use should unite in the releasee, creating in him an estate of freehold. But it seems, from the language of Mr. Butler, that a

required two deeds, and became the usual mode of conveyance in England till the recent statute 7 & 8 Vict. ch. 106, above referred to, though the necessity of a formal lease had been removed by statute in 1841.¹ The statute speaks of persons having a use "in fee-simple, fee-tail, for term of life, or for years," and declares that they "shall henceforth stand, and be seised, deemed and adjudged in lawful seisin, estate, and possession, of and in the same," "of and in such like estates as they had or shall have in use in the same." In this way the interest is made an estate by the statute, without the prerequisite, at common law, of an actual entry.² But though a sufficient estate is thereby created to give effect to a subsequent deed of release, it is still true that a lessee cannot maintain trespass before he shall have made an entry and gained actual possession.³

4. While thus enumerating the forms of conveyance by deed heretofore in use, it may be remarked that, while a deed of simple release, made to one who has neither an estate in, nor possession of, land, would be merely void, a form of deed of the nature of a release, containing words of grant as well as release, commonly known as a "quitclaim deed," has long been in use in this country, and has not only been regarded, practically, as a mode of conveying an independent title to real property, but *is, by the statutes of some of the [*607] States, declared to be effectual for that purpose.⁴

It may be furthermore remarked, that courts, both in Eng-

seisin may, through such a conveyance, be united with a use in a third person, in which respect it operates like a feoffment as a mode of conveying to uses. "The bargain and sale, therefore, or the lease for the year, as it is generally called, operates, and the bargainee is in the possession, by the statute. The release operates by enlarging the estate or possession of the bargainee to a fee; this is at the common law, and if the use be declared to the releasee in fee-simple, it continues an estate at the common law; but if the use is declared to a third person, the statute again intervenes, and annexes or transfers the possession of the releasee to the use of the person to whom the use is declared." Co. Lit. 271, note 231, §§ 2, 3; 4 Cruise, 116; *Id.* 131. See ante, p. *150.

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 146; *Rogers v. Eagle F. Ins. Co.* 9 Wend. 611, 628; *Lalor, Real Estate*, 249.

² *Burton, Real Prop.*, § 131, p. 43, note.

³ *Latwich v. Milton*, Cro. Jac. 604.

⁴ *Post*, § 3, pl. 2.

land and this country, are very liberal in construing deeds, so as to give them effect if possible, and, although intended to come within one class, if they cannot be made operative in that form on account of some defect, they are often found capable, and permitted to accomplish the purposes of the parties, by a construction that brings them within some other class of deeds known to the law. Among the cases that might be selected as illustrations of this, is the case of *Exum v. Canty*, where one made a deed, whereby he covenanted with a trustee that he would stand seised of the estate to his own use, during his own natural life, and, immediately on his death, to the use of the trustee in trust, that he should convey it to A B, his heirs, &c. The consideration stated in the deed, was the love and affection he had for A B, and in consideration that he had before supported the grantor, and had agreed to do so thereafter. But there was no relationship between the grantor and A. B. The court sustained the deed, saying, the instrument was in effect a conveyance which took effect upon its execution and delivery, vesting an interest in them to take effect in possession at the death of the grantor. It was plainly a covenant to stand seised to the use of the parties for whose benefit the property was intended to be conveyed, whose estate vested in possession at the determination of his estate for life reserved in it."¹ So in Alabama, a deed made for love and affection for a grandchild was held to be good, under the doctrine of uses, as a covenant to stand seised, if not good as a bargain and sale for want of a pecuniary consideration, although the words used were "give, grant, bargain, sell, alien, enfeoff, and convey."² In *Steel v. Steel*, a memorandum was attached to a deed granting the premises in terms, which stated, that the grantor did not intend to convey the same until after his decease and that of his wife, and it was held to postpone the right of the grantees to have possession of the estate conveyed, until after the death of the grantor or his wife.³

¹ *Exum v. Canty*, 34 Miss. 569. See also *Wall v. Wall*, 30 Miss. 91, held to be a covenant to stand seised, though in many respects like a testamentary declaration. See also *Edwards v. Smith*, 35 Miss. 197, where the question was whether the instrument should take effect as a will or a deed. ² *Lomax*, Dig. 141.

³ *Horton v. Sledge*, 29 Ala. 478, 496.

⁴ *Steel v. Steel*, 4 Allen, 417, 424.

5. With this brief reference to the different kinds of deeds which have, at times, been in use in England and this country, and most, if not all of which, may still be practically employed here, it will be unnecessary to do more than refer the reader to what may be found upon the subject, in former parts of this work, except as particular cases may be cited to illustrate the laws of particular States.¹

SECTION III.

DEEDS IN USE IN THE UNITED STATES.

1. Of forms of deeds recognized by State statutes.
2. Where deeds of quitclaim are in use.
3. Bargain and sale, &c. forms are in use in South Carolina.
4. What deeds are in use in Rhode Island and Kentucky.
5. Forms prescribed and in use in Tennessee.
- 6, 7. Deeds used in Maryland and Minnesota.
- 8, 9. Deeds in use in New York and Georgia.

1. Many of the States have prescribed forms of deeds in their statutes, but this has generally been regarded rather as a matter of direction and declaration that such a form would be sufficient, than that it should be required. Most of these statutes, in fact, directly or indirectly refer to the common-law modes as familiar and effectual forms of conveyance. Thus, while the form of deed in common use in Massachusetts is borrowed from the ancient charter of feoffment, modified by a declaration of the uses to which the estate is to be held, the statute expressly refers to "bargain and sale," and "other like conveyance of an estate," and declares that "a deed of quitclaim and release, of the form in common use in this State shall be *sufficient to pass all the estate which the grantor [*608] could, lawfully, convey by a deed of bargain and sale."²

2. A deed of quitclaim in common use is not only a conveyance at common law, but is recognized as valid in Connecticut,

¹ Ante, pp. *142-*156.

² Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 89, §§ 3, 8; *Hunt v. Hunt*, 14 Pick. 374, 381; *Wade v. Howard*, 6 Pick. 499; *Bayer v. Cockerill*, 3 Kans. 282, 294.

and in several of the States besides Massachusetts, by express statute.¹

8. In South Carolina, bargain and sale is regarded as a valid mode of conveyance, though lease and release was usually employed till 1795, when a form was prescribed by statute, embracing both these, though not invalidating those previously in use.²

4. In Rhode Island, it is expressly declared, that a deed of bargain and sale, of lease and release, covenant to stand seised, "or any other deed," signed, &c. shall transfer the possession of the grantor, &c. without livery of seisin. And a like declaration is found in the revised statutes of Kentucky, with a provision that a release shall be effectual without a previous lease.³

5. In some States, as already remarked, forms of deeds are prescribed by statute. As in Tennessee, for instance, it is enacted, that "the following or other equivalent form, varied to suit the precise state of facts, are sufficient for the purposes contemplated, without further circumlocution." For a deed in fee with a general warranty: "I hereby convey to A B the following tract of land (describing it), and I warrant the title against all persons whomsoever." Other forms are given, to be used for special covenants, for deeds of quitclaim, of mortgage and deeds of trust, of a brevity as remarkable as that of the form above given.⁴ It has been held by the court, that, though the title to land under the statute of Tennessee does not, on the one hand, pass by operation of the statute of uses, but by deed registered, yet still, on the other hand, such deed does not, like an ancient feoffment, work a disseisin.⁵

¹ *Rogers v. Hillhouse*, 3 Conn. 398, 402. In Minnesota, Comp. Stat. 1858, ch. 35, § 1; in Maine, Rev. Stat. ch. 73, § 14; in Mississippi, Code, 1857, p. 309, art. 17; in Ohio, *Hall v. Ashby*, 9 Ohio, 96; in Illinois, *McConnel v. Reed*, 4 Scamm. 117; *Kerr v. Freeman*, 33 Miss. 292; *Dart v. Dart*, 7 Conn. 255; *Jackson v. Hubble*, 1 Cowen, 613; *Jackson v. Bradford*, 4 Wend. 619; *Bogy v. Shoab*, 13 Mo. 380; *Brown v. Jackson*, 3 Wheat. 452; *Touchard v. Crow*, 20 Cal. 150; *Ants*, § 2, pl. 4; *Hamilton v. Doolittle*, 37 Ill. 482; *Downer v. Smith*, 34 Cal. 123; *Carpentier v. Williamson*, 25 Cal. 168.

² *Craig v. Pinson*, 1 Cheves, 272.

³ R. I. Rev. Stat. ch. 146, § 1; Ky. Rev. Stat., Stant. ed. 1850, ch. 24, § 4.

⁴ Tenn. Code, 1858, p. 410, § 2013.

⁵ *Miller v. Miller*, Meigs, 484, 496.

6. So in Maryland, while there is a form of deed which, it is declared, "shall be sufficient to convey real or personal estate," "and in which the operative word is "grant," [*609] there is a general provision as to "all deeds conveying real estate," that they shall contain the names of the "grantor and grantee," "bargainor and bargainee."¹ And it is a remark of the court, "by the usage and practice of the State, bargains and sales, as a mode of passing estates, have nearly superseded all other modes of conveyance."²

7. On the other hand, in some States, and among them Minnesota, certain requisites in deeds are prescribed by statute, more or less contravening the common law, as, for instance, that deeds must be made directly to the person in whom the possession and profits are intended to be vested, and not to the use of or in trust for such person. This, of course, excludes feoffments to uses, but the statute of that State no further interferes with the forms of deeds than by simply declaring that "conveyances of lands may be made by deed signed," &c.³

8. So in New York, feoffments with livery of seisin, as a mode of conveying lands, are expressly abolished. But deeds of bargain and sale, and of lease and release, may continue to be used. But it is declared that they shall be deemed to be "grants." And deeds must be made directly to the person in whom the possession and profits are intended to be vested.⁴

9. In Georgia, all deeds by way of bargain and sale, are declared to be good, and no deed of feoffment, bargain and sale, deed of gift, or other conveyance, shall be impeached for want of livery of seisin.⁵ So in Indiana, deeds are sustained as deeds of bargain and sale, upon the same ground as that upon which they were held valid by the English courts under the statute of uses. In *Givan v. Doe*, the court regards the deed "as a deed of bargain and sale of the land in controversy. By that deed, the use of the premises passed to the bargainee, and the statute of uses transferred to him the possession." The English statute

¹ 1 Md. Code, 1860, p. 133, art. 24, § 2.

² *Matthews v. Ward*, 10 G. & Johns. 449.

³ Minn. Comp. Stat. 1858, ch. 35, § 1.

⁴ 2 New York, Rev. Stat., 4th ed., p. 148, §§ 149, 155; *Rogers v. Eagle Fire Ins. Co.* 9 Wend. 611; *Lalor, Real Estate*, 237, 248.

⁵ *Cobb*, New Dig. 1851, pp. 163, 164

of enrolments was never in force in that State, and deeds of bargain and sale are held valid between the parties, though never acknowledged or recorded.¹ In Iowa, there are forms of conveyance prescribed by statute. But the Court remarks: "The form is not prescribed to be used by those who do not choose to prefer it, nor, having adopted it, are parties precluded from inserting other covenants of warranty, or from restraining, in express terms, those adopted, as they may desire."² So a deed of release and quitclaim may convey the interest of the releasor without words of grant, although the releasee has no prior interest in or possession of the estate.³ A deed of all the grantor's right and title to land, conveys the land itself. And this is the proper form of release or quitclaim of an estate in lands.⁴ The words "give, grant, and release," in Mississippi, are sufficient in a deed to convey an estate, although the grantor is not in possession.⁵ "So in Iowa, forms in the same words are prescribed by statute."⁶

¹ *Givan v. Doe*, 7 Blackf. 212.

² *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 68.

³ *Russell v. Coffin*, 8 Pick. 143; *Pray v. Pierce*, 7 Mass. 331. See *Berry v. Billings*, 44 Ma. 416; *Bronson v. Paynter*, 4 Dev. & Bat. 395; *Jackson v. Fish*, 10 Johns. 456.

⁴ *Webster v. Webster*, 33 N. H. 22.

⁵ *Fairley v. Fairley*, 34 Miss. 18.

⁶ Iowa "Revision, 1860, § 2240."

SECTION IV.

COMPONENT PARTS OF DEEDS.

1. General forms of deeds, whether poll or indentures.
2. Parts of deeds enumerated.
3. A simple grant sufficient without other parts of a deed.
4. Sundry clauses usual in deeds.
5. Of the *tenendum*.
6. Of the "premises."
7. Effect where the premises are repugnant to the *habendum*.
8. Of the consideration of the deed.
- 9, 10. What consideration necessary under the statute of uses.
- 11, 12. Consideration sufficient if a valuable one.
13. When bargain and sale may operate as a feoffment.
- 14 - 16. Construction as to covenant to stand seised, as a conveyance.
17. Of contradicting or controlling the consideration stated in a deed.
18. Inserting consideration prevents a resulting use, &c.
19. Of the granting words in a deed.
20. Operative words in lease and release.
21. Deeds take effect according to the intent of parties.
22. Of defining the estate in the granting part of the deed.
23. Of the description of the thing granted.
- 24 - 26. Rules and maxims as to what passes under a description.
27. Principal carries incident, but not the converse.
- 30, 31. All the constituents of a thing pass under a general grant of it.
32. What can pass as appurtenant, — land cannot.
33. What passes as *parcel*, though nominally appurtenant.
34. What passes under the term *mesuage*.
35. Punctuation not regarded in a deed.
- 36 - 38. Rules applied, if parts of deeds are vague or contradictory.
39. Quantity of land mentioned, regarded as a description.
- 40, 41. How far distances and points of compass are regarded.
42. "Northerly," as a course, means north.
43. Boundary lines held to be straight between monuments.
44. How far monuments must exist when the deed is made.
45. What may be referred to as monuments in a deed.
46. Of streams of water.
- 46 a. What are navigable streams.
47. Of ponds and lakes.
48. Of navigable streams.
49. Of sea and shore.
50. Of the ordinance of Massachusetts as to flats.
51. Of highways as boundaries.
52. Parol evidence, when admissible, to identify boundaries.

53. Effect of boundaries may not be controlled by parol.
54. A reference by one deed to another adopts its description.
55. Of the effect of reference to a place.
56. Of recitals in deeds and their effect.
57. Exceptions in deeds, how made, and of what.
58. What are the incidents to an exception.
59. Limitations of what is excepted the same as of what is granted.
60. Of the *habendum*.
61. Construction and effect of an *habendum* in a deed.
62. *Habendum* has no effect on what is not granted.
63. If repugnant to a grant, it yields to the grant.
64. It serves to limit and declare the uses of a deed.
65. Of the clause as to passing title deeds.
66. Of the *reddendum*.
67. Reservations must be to the grantor.
68. Must be out of the estate granted.
69. Case of *Dyer v. Sanford*, a reservation construed a grant.
70. Where conditions in deeds are usually inserted.

1. Illustrations of the foregoing kind, showing a general recognition of the common-law forms of conveyance, even where the subject has been regulated by legislation, might be multiplied by reference to the statutes of other States.

[*610] But, as it is not proposed *to describe these in detail, it has been thought sufficient for the purposes of this work, to consider the parts of some one of the deeds in use in this country, in which such parts will be presented in the most simple form. And for distinctness and brevity, the form in use in Massachusetts, known as that of a "warranty deed," has been adopted, premising that the deeds in use in New England, are deeds poll, while those in New York, Maryland, and many of the States are, or have been, in form, indentures; and further, that, though there are usually inserted in deeds, covenants in respect to title, the conveyance results from the granting part of the deed, independent of these, and may be good without them. A deed, the form of which is given below, may, when recorded, have the effect of a feoffment at common law, by force of the statute.¹ *

* NOTE. — Know all men by these presents, that I, A. B., in consideration of ———, to me paid by C. D., &c., the receipt whereof is hereby acknowl-

¹ *Marshall v. Fisk*, 6 Mass. 24; *Emery v. Chase*, 5 Me. 232; *Green v. Thomas*, 11 Me. 318.

*2. The principal object in transcribing this form, [*611] was to exhibit to the reader such parts as are now retained, of those into which Lord Coke and other early writers divided the deeds then in use. These were distinguished as the premises, the *habendum*, the *tenendum*, the *reddendum*, condition, warranty, and covenants.¹

3. It is usual to follow a division, somewhat like the one above given, when considering the constituent elements of a good deed, and the rules of construction applicable to them. A deed now, however, may be effective, to all intents, to pass a title, though not written in the order here indicated, or wanting, in fact, everything but the briefest possible expression of an intent to convey the land described, if it is signed, sealed, and delivered, as the deed of the party making it. And it is, accordingly, stated by Lord Coke, that if a deed of feoffment is without premises, *habendum*, *tenendum*, *reddendum*, clause of warranty, date, &c. it is good, for if one by deed give lands

edged, do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell, and convey, unto the said C. D., the following described, &c. ——— To have and to hold the aforegranted premises, with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging, to the said C. D., his heirs and assigns, to his and their use and behoof forever. (Then usually follow these covenants.) And I, the said A. B., for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, do covenant with the said C. D., his heirs and assigns, that I am lawfully seised in fee-simple, of the aforegranted premises, that they are free from all incumbrances, that I have good right to sell and convey the same to the said C. D., his heirs and assigns, forever, as aforesaid, and that I will, and my heirs, executors, and administrators, shall warrant and defend the same, to the said C. D., his heirs and assigns forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons. In witness whereof, I, the said A. B. with E. F., wife of the said A. B., in token of her release of all right of dower in the granted premises, have hereunto set our hands and seals, this ——— day of ——— in the year, &c.

Signed, sealed, and delivered
in presence of



A. B. [SEAL.]
E. F. [SEAL.]

ss. ——— 18 .

Then personally appeared the above-named A. B., and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act.

Before me, ———, Justice, &c.

Where, as in Massachusetts, a right of homestead exists in the land, the deed should contain a special release of the same by the wife.

¹ Shep. Touch. 74; Co. Lit. 6 a, 7 a; 1 Wood, Conv. 236, Powell's note.

to another and to his heirs, without saying anything more, and put his seal to the deed and deliver it, and make livery where necessary, it is good.¹ And Judge Kent gives a form which he thinks would be good all over the United States, which is quite as brief.² Indeed, the form hereinbefore copied from the statute of Tennessee,³ serves to show in how few words the simple operation of passing a title by deed may be accomplished.

4. But though such a thing is possible, few are willing to take a bare, naked title without some covenant of assurance that, if it fails, they shall be indemnified for what they thereby lose; and comparatively few deeds are made in which there are not either recitals, exceptions, conditions, or reservations, as well as covenants respecting the title. While, therefore, courts are, as is said by Hobart, "*astuti*," in finding out some [*612] mode by which the intentions of parties in making deeds should not be defeated from mere defect in form, it is always safer, in a matter of so grave importance, to have a proper regard for the forms, as well as the phraseology, which have become settled by long-continued use, as well as adjudicated cases.⁴

5. It is, therefore, proposed to follow the usual course of analysis, in considering the parts of deeds in common use, though it may be remarked that the *tenendum*, limiting and defining the tenure by which the lands are to be held, and once an important clause in the deed, is useless in this country; and practically so in England, since the statute of *Quia Emptores*.⁵

6. First, then, of the *Premises*. This part of the deed embraces all that precedes the words "to have and to hold," or, in other words, all before the *habendum*, including, therefore, the parties, the consideration, whatever recitals it may be proper to insert by the way of explanation, the description of property granted, with such exceptions out of the same as the parties intend to make. Besides these, not only the words of grant,

¹ Co. Lit. 7 a; 1 Wood, Conv. 236, 237, and Powell's note; Shep. Touch. 75; Moore, Abst. 3.

² 4 Kent, Com. 461.

³ Ante, p. *608.

⁴ Roe v. Tranmarr, Willes, 682, 684. See Maine, Anc. Law, 276.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 237; Shep. Touch. 52, and note.

but usually the estate or quantity of ownership, are also mentioned in connection with the grant, though not given in the form inserted in the foregoing note, as such mention may be dispensed with, where it is followed by the *habendum*, whose purpose, as it will appear, it is to limit and define the estate or amount of interest or ownership in the land or property granted, and which it is intended to transfer to the grantee.¹ In the case of *Berry v. Billings*, while the court adopt the above definition of "premises," as applied to a deed, they hold, that though the premises do not contain the name of the grantee, nor the limitation of the estate intended to be granted, these may be supplied by the *habendum*, and the deed thereby be made good.² So where the premises, though they acknowledge the receipt of the consideration, and the name of the intended grantee, contained no words of grant, but were followed by an *habendum* to J. B. in fee, with covenants of seisin, &c. to J. B., it was held to pass the estate described in the deed.³ In one case, the grantor, by indenture, granted, bargained, and sold certain interests in real estate to another, without limiting the estate, and added a clause *binding* himself and heirs "to ratify and confirm" to the grantee and his heirs, the subject of the grant. It was held, that this clause did the office of an *habendum*, in limiting the estate granted.⁴

7. Sometimes there is an apparent repugnancy between the granting part of the deed and the *habendum*, in respect to the estate which the grantee is to take in the property granted, which courts reconcile, if possible, so as to give effect to both. But, as will be seen when considering the *habendum*, if the language of the grant be definite in limiting the estate, and that of the *habendum* is clearly repugnant to the grant, the *habendum* yields to the terms of the grant.⁵

8. It is not proposed to add to what has been said upon the *subject of the parties to the deed. But the [*613]

¹ Co. Lit. 6 a; Shep. Touch. 74.

² *Berry v. Billings*, 44 Maine, 416, 423. See *Sumner v. Williams*, 8 Mass. 174; *Budd v. Brooke*, 3 Gill, 235.

³ *Bridge v. Wellington*, 1 Mass. 219.

⁴ *Kenworthy v. Tullis*, 3 Ind. 96.

⁵ *Farquharson v. Eichelberger*, 15 Md. 63; *Budd v. Brooke*, 3 Gill, 236; 2 Lomax, Dig. 215.

consideration requires a somewhat more extended examination. This subject presents itself in two points of view, first, as to a deed considered as a thing executed, with its purposes accomplished, and, second, as to whatever is executory in the deed, especially the covenants contained therein. Perhaps to these may be added a third, the extent of the right to explain or control the statement in the deed in respect to the actual thing or amount paid, or agreed to be paid, as the consideration for the same. In the absence of fraud towards the grantor or his creditors, there does not seem to be any occasion to allege or prove any consideration in order to give effect to a deed of feoffment or any properly common-law conveyance. Such a conveyance, properly consummated, operates to pass the title from the grantor to the grantee, which will be as effectual, if a voluntary gift, as if done for a valuable consideration.¹ Therefore, a want or failure of consideration is no ground of avoidance of a deed.² Thus, where in consideration of a promise to marry him, the grantor gave a deed of land, but died before the marriage took place, it did not affect the validity of the deed.³ To bring a conveyance within the category of "voluntary conveyances," there must be a total want of any substantial consideration for the same; mere inadequacy of consideration would not be enough. In the one case, if the grantor is indebted at the time of making it, his creditors may avoid it, whereas, if it is only an inadequate consideration, the deed will not be void as to creditors, unless made with a fraudulent intent.⁴ A deed made upon a *good* consideration only, is a voluntary conveyance, but if made upon a consideration deemed *valuable* in law, it is of a different character.⁵

9. But, for reasons heretofore explained, in order to give effect to deeds deriving their force and validity from the statute

¹ *Den v. Hanks*, 5 Ired. 30, 32; *Jackson v. Dillon*, 2 Overt. 261, 264; *Perry v. Price*, 1 Mo. 553-555; *Rogers v. Hillhouse*, 3 Conn. 398, 402.

² *Taylor v. King*, 6 Munf. 358; *Green v. Thomas*, 11 Me. 318. See *Thompson v. Thompson*, 9 Ind. 331; *Doe v. Hurd*, 7 Blackf. 510; *Winans v. Peebles*, 31 Barb. 380; *Boynton v. Rees*, 8 Pick. 332; *Pierson v. Armstrong*, 1 Clarke (Iowa), 262; *Laberee v. Carleton*, 53 Me. 212.

³ *Smith v. Allen*, 5 Allen, 458.

⁴ *Washband v. Washband*, 27 Conn. 424.

⁵ *Rockhill v. Spraggs*, 9 Ind. 32.

of uses, there must, as a general proposition, be a consideration acknowledged or proved, such as would, before the statute, have raised a use in favor of the party intended to be benefited, since it is by the union of the seisin with this use by act of law, that these deeds become operative.¹ But a deed "in consideration of lawful money well and truly paid" &c. was held to convey a good title, although no use is declared, since, though it do not state the number of pounds paid, it acknowledges the payment of value.² The application of this doctrine, with greater or less stringency in different States, has given rise to a direct conflict, in some instances, in the decisions of the courts upon substantially the same state of facts. But it may be stated, as the prevailing doctrine, *first*, that to sustain a deed of bargain and sale requires a pecuniary or valuable consideration; *second*, to sustain a deed of covenant to stand seised, requires a good consideration, using that term in its technical sense, as denoting the regard which is supposed to arise from consanguinity or marriage between the parties; *third*, that if no consideration is expressed in the deed, whatever *the consideration was, may be proved *aliunde*, and if [*614] one consideration be expressed, any other not inconsistent with or repugnant to the one expressed, may be proved in a similar manner; and, *fourth*, that although it is always competent to control the fact stated in the deed, as to the amount or thing paid, in a question involving the recovery of the purchase-money, or as a measure of damages in an action upon the covenants in the deed, it is not competent to contradict the acknowledgment of a consideration paid, in order to affect the validity of the deed, in creating or passing a title to the estate thereby granted.³ A few cases, it is believed, will establish the doctrines here stated, although some of them will be found inconsistent with each other, in other respects.

10. In New York, before the system now prevailing was adopted, it was held, that a pecuniary consideration was essential to give validity to a deed of bargain and sale, and that a

¹ Den v. Hanks, 5 Ired. 30; Jackson v. Dillon, 2 Overt. 264, 265. How far the acknowledgement of consideration in a deed is taken as evidence of its having been paid, see Galland v. Jackman, 26 Cal. 86.

² Wortman v. Ayles, 1 Hannay (N. B.), 65.

³ Kinnebrew v. Kinnebrew, 35 Ala. 636; Webb v. Webb, 29 Ala. 606.

deed could not be sustained where the only consideration was that the grantee was to do certain things therein recited, one of which was to pay money, but did not bind himself to their performance by executing the deed himself.¹ A similar doctrine is sustained in Maryland, that the consideration for bargain and sale must be a pecuniary one, or expressed in such general terms that a money consideration may be averred.²

11. But the better doctrine seems to be, that any valuable consideration, a *quid pro quo*, acknowledged or proved, will be sufficient to sustain a deed of bargain and sale.³ Thus, in *Jackson v. Pike*, the consideration was, the benefit to the grantor's other lands, to result from the use to be made of that conveyed to the grantee.⁴ In another case, the conveyance was stated to be made "for value received."⁵ In another, for "a certain sum in hand paid," but no amount mentioned.⁶ In yet another, while a consideration was necessary, and was stated to be "—— dollars," it was held, that the grantee might supply the blank by proof.⁷ In one case, a covenant to render services was held a sufficient consideration for a deed.⁸ In Pennsylvania, in a case where no consideration was expressed in the deed, the grantee was allowed to make it good by proof *aliunde*.⁹ It is also laid down, in the case of *Boardman v. Dean*, that a deed of bargain and sale differs from that of gift or release, and that "the payment of the consideration was necessary to transfer the use, and make the instrument operative." But though the language is broad enough to admit evidence, as was done in that case, to avoid the deed for the non-payment of the consideration, the circumstances of the case were so peculiar, that it can hardly

¹ *Jackson v. Florence*, 16 Johns. 47; *Jackson v. Sebring*, Id. 528; *Jackson v. Delancey*, 4 Cow. 427; *Jackson v. Cadwell*, 1 Cow. 622; *Corwin v. Corwin*, 9 Barb. 219.

² *Cheney v. Watkins*, 1 Harr. & J. 527, 532. So in Penn., *Okison v. Patterson*, 1 W. & S. 395.

³ *Den v. Hanks*, 5 Ired. 30; *Jackson v. Leek*, 19 Wend. 339, 341.

⁴ *Jackson v. Pike*, 9 Cow. 69.

⁵ *Jackson v. Alexander*, 3 Johns. 434, 492.

⁶ *Jackson v. Schoonmaker*, 2 Johns. 230; *Shep. Touch.* 223.

⁷ *Wood v. Beach*, 7 Verm. 522, 528.

⁸ *Young v. Ringo*, 1 Mon. 30, 32.

⁹ *White v. Weeks*, 1 Penn. 486.

be a guiding authority in other cases.¹ And in Alabama, it was held, that if one consideration was expressed, any other, not inconsistent with that, might be proved.² In Missouri, it is regarded as doubtful whether it is necessary to allege or prove any consideration to sustain a deed of bargain and sale, while it is clear that if none is expressed, one may be proved. Indeed, in Tennessee, under the operation of their statute, it has been held, that the acknowledgment of a consideration in a deed is a mere ceremony, and not essential to its validity.³

12. In Connecticut, a quitclaim deed "for divers good causes and considerations," is good, and, being a conveyance at common law, would be good without any consideration.⁴ A deed was held good in Maine, where the consideration was a condition subsequent to support a third person, a stranger to the deed.⁵ In New Hampshire and Massachusetts, a general indebtedness, or a liability of the grantee as surety for the grantor, was held a sufficient consideration for an absolute deed.⁶ But the only consideration which will support a covenant to stand seised, is blood-relationship or marriage.⁷

13. A deed intended as one of bargain and sale, may, nevertheless, operate as a feoffment, if it contain, among its operative words, "give and grant," and is accompanied by a livery of seisin proved or presumed.⁸ So a deed of "gift" may be good without consideration, being, in effect, a deed of feoffment.⁹

*14. From the doctrine mentioned by many of the [*616] courts, where no statute has been made upon the subject, that no estate of freehold *in futuro*, other than by way of remainder, could be created or conveyed by a deed of bargain and sale, but that this could be done by one of covenant to stand seised,¹⁰ rules differing widely in their stringency have

¹ Boardman v. Dean, 34 Penn. St. 252.

² Toulmin v. Austin, 5 Stew. & P. 410.

³ Perry v. Price, 1 Mo. 553 - 555; Jackson v. Dillon, 2 Overt. 261, 264.

⁴ Rogers v. Hillhouse, 3 Conn. 398, 402.

⁵ Green v. Thomas, 11 Me. 320.

⁶ Buffum v. Green, 5 N. H. 71; Bissell v. Strong, 9 Pick. 562; McWhorter v. Wright, 5 Ga. 555. But see Den v. Hampton, 8 Ired. 457.

⁷ Rollins v. Riley, 44 N. H. 11.

⁸ Cheney v. Watkins, 1 Harr. & J. 527, 532. ⁹ Den v. Hanks, 5 Ired. 30, 31.

¹⁰ Jackson v. Delancey, 4 Cow. 427; Welsh v. Foster, 12 Mass. 93, 96; Marden

been applied by different courts in construing what relationship will constitute a *good* consideration, sufficient to sustain a covenant to stand seised. In *Jackson v. Sebring*, it was held, that no use could be raised in favor of any one not connected with the grantor by blood or marriage, so as to sustain a deed of covenant to stand seised, even though the grant were in trust for the benefit of one thus connected.¹ So in *Green v. Thomas*, it was assumed by the court that blood or marriage alone would sustain a covenant to stand seised.² In *Cheney v. Watkins*, the requisite consideration is said to be "natural love and affection."³ But in *Jackson v. Delancey*, the rule is more positively stated, and, as given in that case, as well as in *Jackson v. Cadwell*, will be found to be directly at variance with the rule as recognized in Massachusetts, in more than one particular. Thus the former case holds, that a consideration of blood or marriage is requisite, and that, if one consideration, like money, be expressed, another, like consanguinity or marriage, may not be shown. In the latter, the deed was to the grantor's daughter-in-law till her son was of age, the remainder to her son, the grantor's grandson, and the deed was held void, because there was neither a pecuniary consideration, nor such a relationship with the daughter-in-law as to sustain the deed as a covenant to stand seised.⁴

[*617] *15. In Massachusetts, on the contrary, it has been held, that where the consideration in a deed was stated to be \$400, but the deed could not take effect as a common-law conveyance, because the estate was to be had and held after

v. Chase, 32 Me. 329; *Brewer v. Hardy*, 22 Pick. 376, 380; *Wallis v. Wallis*, 4 Mass. 135; *Barrett v. French*, 1 Conn. 354. See *Bell v. Scammon*, 15 N. H. 381, that it may be done by either form of conveyance. In Vermont, a freehold in *future* may, by statute, be expressly granted. *Gorham v. Daniels*, 23 Verm. 600.

¹ *Jackson v. Sebring*, 16 Johns. 528, 535.

² *Green v. Thomas*, 11 Me. 321.

³ *Cheney v. Watkins*, 1 Harr. & J. 527, 532.

⁴ *Jackson v. Delancey*, 4 Cow. 427; *Corwin v. Corwin*, 9 Barb. 219; *Jackson v. Cadwell*, 1 Cow. 622. But in *McCrea v. Parmort*, 16 Wend. 460, the principle, that where one consideration is expressed, another may not be proved, was entirely and distinctly overruled, and unlimited latitude of inquiry into the consideration of deeds allowed. *Frink v. Green*, 5 Barb. 455, 457; *Rockhill v. Spraggs*, 9 Ind. 30; *Andrews v. Andrews*, 12 Ind. 349.

[656]

the death of the grantor, and it appeared in evidence that the grantor was father to the grantee, the court held, that it was a good deed of covenant to stand seised, and the consideration of natural affection might be averred, notwithstanding the pecuniary one stated in the deed.¹ In the case of *Gale v. Coburn*,² where the consideration in the deed was \$3,000, it was held, that the deed could not take effect as a feoffment, or a bargain and sale, because of its being, in terms, a conveyance of a freehold *in futuro*, but that it might be a covenant to stand seised, although the only relationship between the grantor and grantee was, that the latter had married the daughter of the former, by whom he had children then living, but who were not mentioned in the deed, and the wife had died many years previously.

16. Although considerable has already been said upon whether an estate of freehold, to commence *in futuro*, can be created by a deed of bargain and sale,³ and any attempt to reconcile the decisions bearing upon that point may be ineffectual, yet the reasoning of Walworth, Ch., in *Rogers v. Eagle Fire Ins. Co.*,⁴ in which he maintains the affirmative of the proposition, and the authorities upon which he rests, would seem to leave little doubt in the matter beyond what arises from the circumstances, that other courts have taken a different view of the law. After analyzing the two modes of raising uses before the statute of 27 Hen VIII., and referring to the statute requiring deeds of bargain and sale to [*618] be enrolled, he remarks: "This distinction under the statute of enrolments afterwards became very important, although the bargain and sale previous to the statute of uses, was, in fact, nothing but a covenant to stand seised to the use of the bargainee. It will be seen from this examination of the uses of the common law, that there could not be any good reason why the same springing, contingent, or future uses, might not be created by a bargain and sale, founded upon a

¹ *Wallis v. Wallis*, 4 Mass. 135; *Brewer v. Hardy*, 22 Pick. 380; *Parker v. Nichols*, 7 Pick. 111. See *Potter v. Everitt*, 7 Ired. Eq. 152.

² *Gale v. Coburn*, 18 Pick. 397, and see *Welsh v. Foster*, 12 Mass. 93; *Den v. Hanks*, 5 Ired. 31; *Bell v. Scammon*, 15 N. H. 381; *Marden v. Chase*, 32 Me. 329, 332. See *Bryan v. Bradley*, 12 Conn. 474; s. c. 16 Conn. 475.

³ Ante, pp. *123, *124.

⁴ *Rogers v. Eagle Fire Ins. Co.* 9 Wend. 611, 626-631.

valuable consideration, as were allowed to be raised by the less meritorious consideration of blood or marriage, and there was not, in fact, at the time of the passing of the statute of uses, any such distinction as is contended for in this case." He then considers the forms of conveyance, which had their origin in the statute of uses, and, remarking that the statute of enrolments was not in operation in this country, concludes: "As the statute of enrolments was never in force in this State (New York), I have no doubt that, at the date of the deed in question, a future freehold might be created by this conveyance, operating as a bargain and sale merely, provided it was founded on a sufficient consideration to raise a use." He cites in support of this general position, 4 Kent, Com. 298; Burt. Real Prop. § 145; Jackson v. Swart, 20 Johns. 87, and Cornish, Purch. Deed, 35. And to these may be added, besides the authorities cited, *ante*, chapter 2, on Uses; 2 Bl. Com. 166, Archbold's note; 2 Prest. Conv. 157, whose language is, "a bargain and sale, or covenant to stand seised to uses will be free from objection, although it is to give an estate of freehold to commence at a future day, or upon an event," &c.; and Davies v. Speed,¹ where Holt, J., says: "The first use may be a springing use, for if I bargain and sell to the use of another, five years hence, this is a good future use." This subject has undergone a searching and discriminating examination by the court of Maine, who fully sustain the doctrine, that a freehold *in futuro* may be conveyed by a deed of bargain and sale, and in this position they are sustained by the court of New Hampshire, confirming the reasoning in Rogers v. Eagle F. Ins. Co.² And Wood, in his Institutes, in speaking of this mode of conveyance, says: "On the bargain and sale of lands, no use may be declared, but what the law doth make, viz. to the use of the bargainee." "A covenant to stand seised to uses, may be to the use of a stranger, but then it must be for money, or other valuable consideration." (p. 266.)

17. There is a class of cases relating to the consideration stated in deeds, in which there is a conflict of opinion, more

¹ Davies v. Speed, 12 Mod. 39.

² Wyman v. Brown, 50 Me. 150; Jordan v. Stevens, 51 Me. 79; Drown v. Smith, 52 Me. 141; Bell v. Scammon, 15 N. H. 394.

seeming than real, if a proper discrimination is made as to the grounds upon which several decisions rest. These cases relate to how far it is competent to contradict the receipt acknowledging *the payment of consideration usually con- [*619] tained in a deed, and how far the facts as to a consideration may be proved, where one, other than that proposed to be shown, is stated in the deed. The consideration stated and acknowledged in a deed, is presumed to be the true value agreed to be paid, until the contrary is proved.¹ But the amount named is only *prima facie* evidence of what was paid, and the true consideration may be shown, though it differ from that in the deed.² But it is competent to prove, by parol, what the real consideration agreed to be paid was, and to show that the same or some part of it, remains unpaid, though not thereby to impeach the title conveyed by the deed.³ In Delaware, the vendor may prove the consideration to be unpaid, and recover the same in an action, although he has acknowledged the receipt of it in his deed; so in Illinois.⁴ But in North Carolina, the acknowledgment of payment of a consideration in a deed, is held to be conclusive, and not open to be contradicted or controlled by parol evidence.⁵ And in the case cited of *Kimball v. Walker*, the court say, the same rule, as above stated, is adopted in England, and Maine, and Maryland, as well as North Carolina.⁶ In Massachusetts, the courts leave the matter open to be tried, in an action of assumpsit to recover the consideration money, which the purchaser promised to pay, and has not, although the plaintiff's deed recites its having been done. And a grantor who had made and delivered a deed with this recital, was permitted to recover in an action of assumpsit, although the promise of his grantee was, in fact, to convey land in payment

¹ *Clements v. Landrum*, 26 Ga. 401.

² *Lawton v. Buckingham*, 15 Iowa, 22; *Morris Canal v. Ryerson*, 3 Dutch. 467; *Rabsuhl v. Lack*, 35 Mo. 316.

³ *Wilkinson v. Scott*, 17 Mass. 257; *Kumler v. Ferguson*, 7 Minn. 442; *Irvine v. McKeon*, 23 Cal. 475; *Coles v. Soulsby*, 21 Cal. 47; *Bullard v. Briggs*, 7 Pick. 537.

⁴ *Callaway v. Hearn*, 1 Houst. 610; *Kimball v. Walker*, 30 Ill. 511.

⁵ *Brocket v. Foscue*, 1 Hawks, 64; *Mendenhall v. Parish*, 8 Jones, L. 106; *Lowe v. Weatherley*, 4 Dev. & B. 212.

⁶ 30 Ill. 511.

for the same instead of money.¹ But the promise to pay, in order to be good within the statute of frauds, must be to be performed within one year, where it is merely oral.² But this is to be taken, subject to the restrictions created by the statute of frauds. Thus, where one made a deed acknowledging the receipt of a valuable consideration, he was not allowed to show that the consideration was an agreement on the part of the grantee to convey the premises to a third party, since such an agreement, not being in writing, came within the statute of frauds.³ This belongs rather to the department of evidence than of deeds of conveyance, for it is believed that, however the cases may conflict, they all agree, in effect, in this: that it is not competent to prove that no consideration has been paid, where one has been acknowledged in the deed, for the purpose of impeaching the validity of the deed, unless it is for the purpose of establishing fraud against the grantor. The true doctrine is stated in *Grout v. Townsend*, that where a deed acknowledges the receipt of a consideration, the grantor and all claiming under him are estopped from denying that one was paid. They may disprove the payment for the purpose of recovering the consideration money, but they cannot do so for the purpose of destroying the effect and operation of the deed.⁴ The design of the clause acknowledging payment of consideration, is not to fix the precise amount paid, "but to prevent a resulting trust in the grantee."⁵ It cannot be contradicted or varied by parol, so as in any way to affect the purpose of the deed, that is, its operation as a conveyance.⁶ In *Rockhill v. Spraggs*, in a

¹ *Basford v. Pearson*, 9 Allen, 393; *Nutting v. Dickinson*, 8 Allen, 540.

² *Marcy v. Marcy*, 9 Allen, 8.

³ *Griswold v. Messenger*, 6 Pick. 519.

⁴ *Grout v. Townsend*, 2 Hill, 554, 557; *McCrea v. Purmort*, 16 Wend. 460; *Barnum v. Childs*, 1 Sandf. 58, 62; *Meriam v. Harsen*, 2 Barb. Ch. 232, 267; *Bank of the U. S. v. Houseman*, 6 Paige, Ch. 526; *Doe v. Beardale*, 2 McLean, 412, 414; *Harvey v. Alexander*, 1 Rand. 219; *Goodwin v. Gilbert*, 9 Mass. 310; *Winans v. Peebles*, 31 Barb. 371, 380; *Farrington v. Barr*, 36 N. H. 86; *Graves v. Graves*, 9 Foster, 129; *Philbrook v. Delano*, 29 Me. 410; *Wilt v. Franklin*, 1 Binn. 502, 518. But see *Boardman v. Dean*, 34 Penn. St. 252. It seems that in England, one is estopped to claim the purchase-money by suit, against his acknowledgment in the deed that it has been paid. *Baker v. Dewey*, 1 B. & C. 704.

⁵ *Meeker v. Meeker*, 16 Conn. 383, 387; *Kimball v. Walker*, 30 Ill. 511; *Sprigg v. Mt. Pleasant Bank*, 14 Peters, 206; *Stackpole v. Robbins*, 47 Barb. 219.

⁶ *Beach v. Packard*, 10 Verm. 96, 100. See *Grout v. Townsend*, 2 Denio, 336; *Hurn v. Soper*, 6 Harr. & J. 276; *Shep. Touch.* 223.

deed from father to son, in which a consideration of \$300 was acknowledged, the court permitted the other heirs of the father, after his decease, to show that this was by way of advancement, and that no valuable consideration was paid. But this, it should be stated, did not avoid the deed.¹

18. It may be stated, therefore, that one of the purposes of inserting the acknowledgment of a valuable consideration in a deed, is to prevent the resulting of any use or trust to the grantor, as was explained in a former part of this work.²

19. Another part of the premises of a deed consists of the operative words of grant or conveyance. In the form given, these are "give, bargain sell, and convey," which *cover almost any form of conveyance, whether at [*620] common law or under the statute of uses. Nor does the use of the wrong tense, as "has given and granted," instead of "do" or "does give and grant," make any difference; either would be sufficient.³ So where the grant was to A and his heirs, provided if A die in his minority without issue, then the property "to go" to the issue of B, was held to be sufficient to convey it to such issue as a remainder.⁴ And, as has been before said, such a deed duly recorded, is regarded in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, Mississippi, and several other States, as equivalent to a feoffment with livery of seisin.⁵ The elementary writers insist upon the importance of the words of grant being suitable to the nature of the deed, and it is accordingly stated that, for a feoffment, the proper words are, "give," "grant," "enfeoff," &c., and for bargain and sale, "grant, bargain, and sell," &c.⁶ But the words "bargain and sell" are not essential to such a conveyance; any words of equivalent signification which would, at common law, raise a use, will be sufficient if they show the intent of the parties.⁷ Thus, a deed, though in terms a covenant to stand seised, if indented and enrolled, and its consideration was a pecuniary one,

¹ *Rockhill v. Spraggs*, 9 Ind. 30.

² *Ante*, p. *134.

³ *Pierson v. Armstrong*, 1 Iowa, 292.

⁴ *Folk v. Varn*, 9 Rich. Eq. 303, 310.

⁵ *Miss. Code*, 1857, p. 308, art. 11; *Rhode Island, Rev. Stat. ch. 146, § 1*; *Chalker v. Chalker*, 1 Conn. 79, 89.

⁶ 1 *Wood, Conv.* 203.

⁷ 2 *Wood, Conv.* 15.

would be a good deed of bargain and sale.¹ But it is essential to a valid deed that it should contain words which show clearly an intent to grant the maker's interest or estate in the premises in question. And where the only words in the deed indicating such intent were, "sign over," it was held to be inoperative as a grant.²

20. The usual operative words in a deed of lease and release, are, "grant, bargain, and sell," which give effect to the *lease*, and for this a pepper-corn is a sufficient consideration, while the words "grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, and forever quit-claim," give effect to the *release*, though, if it were regarded as a simple release, the words "remise," "release," and "quit-claim," would be the proper and sufficient words. In all these forms, it will be observed the word "grant," which seems to be a generic term, is made use of. And what the author cited remarks, is fully sustained by multiplied cases, that, if it is clear that it is the intent of the maker of the deed that the estate should pass thereby, it will, if possible, be so construed as to effect this, although it want formal words, if there be any word in the deed sufficient to convey the estate.³ It [*621] may be remarked, however, that the word "grant," is sometimes omitted intentionally in deeds, from its being, in some cases, construed by the common law into a general warranty.⁴ But this will be more properly considered under the head of covenants in a deed.

21. "The law," says Mr. Powell, in his notes to Wood's Conveyancing, "is curious, and almost subtilizes to devise reasons and means to make assurances and deeds enure according to the just intent of parties, and to avoid wrong and injury which, by abiding by rigid rules, may be wrought out of innocent acts."⁵ And in the text of the work reference is made

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 203; 2 Id. 15; Shep. Touch. 222.

² McKinney v. Settles, 31 Mo. 541.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 203, and Powell's note; 2 Rolle, Abr. 789, pl. 30; Shep. Touch. 82, 222, and Prest. note; Lynch v. Livingston, 8 Barb. 463, 485; Shove v. Pinck, 5 T. R. 124; Roe v. Tranmarr, 2 Wils. 75, 78; Clanrickard v. Sidney, Hob. 277; Marden v. Chase, 32 Me. 329; Young v. Ringo, 1 Monr. 30, 32; Cornish, Purch. Deeds, 29. The word "grant" is not necessary in making a grant, if the intention to make it be manifest by the deed.

⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 203.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 206, note.

to *Adams v. Steer*, where, in a deed of a reversion, the only words of conveyance were, "aliened, bargained, and sold," and the word "grant" was not found in the deed, nor was the deed enrolled so as to operate as a bargain and sale. But it was held, that the reversion would pass by force of the word *alien*.¹ And the Touchstone says, *dedi* or *concessi* may amount to a grant, a feoffment, a gift, a lease or release, a confirmation, a surrender, and it is in the election of the party to whom the deed is made, to use it to which of these purposes he will."² Words of release, moreover, may avail as a grant or a covenant to stand seised.³ But a mere naked release to one not in possession of, or having a vested interest in the premises, would be void.⁴ But though in the form of a release, if there are sufficient words, it may operate as a grant in order to make it good.⁵

22. As has been already stated, it is common to define, by the granting words in the premises of a deed, the estate thereby intended to be created, by adding, in connection therewith, proper terms of limitation, as to C. D. "and his heirs," and the like. After what has been said upon the subject,⁶ it is only necessary to add that, at common law, words of grant to a man without words of limitation or inheritance, were understood to create in him a life estate, and that the word "heirs" *was indispensable to create an estate of inheritance. [*622] But this has been altered by statute in several of the States, as will be seen by reference to a note upon the page above referred to.

23. The next matter in order, as one of the parts of the premises, is the description of the thing granted. This is, of course, a most important part of the deed, as its purpose is to identify that upon which the other clauses of the deed are designed to operate, and if the subject of the grant cannot be ascertained by its description, the grant becomes void from the necessity of the case.⁷ By statute now, courts are authorized

¹ *Adams v. Steer*, Cro. Jac. 210.

² *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 91; *Pierce v. Armstrong*, 1 Clarke (Iowa), 292.

³ *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 91; *Roe v. Tranmarr*, 2 Wils. 75.

⁴ *Branham v. Mayor, &c.* 24 Cal. 606; *Bennett v. Irwin*, 3 Johns. 366.

⁵ *Goodtitle v. Bailey*, Cowp. 601.

⁶ *Ante*, vol. 1. p. *29.

⁷ 1 Wood, Conv. 206; *Wofford v. McKinna*, 23 Tex. 44.

to reform deeds, where, by mistake, the words of a deed are made to convey other estate than the parties intended, even though the mistake consists in the legal effect of the words used, while the words themselves were such as the scrivener intended to make use of. Thus, where a grant of an estate was made, excepting the widow's right of dower, it was held to be competent for the grantor to show that the exception was of the land set to the widow, and not, as the effect of the words of the deed implied, the widow's life estate only in the land.¹ In one case the court reformed a deed where the grantor had fraudulently erased a covenant in respect to the quantity of land.² And the court will reform a deed so as to correct a mistake in the point of compass stated in it, whether it be between the parties to the deed and their heirs, or any one purchasing with notice of the mistake. But if any intermediate owner of the estate had taken it without notice, he would have a right to stand upon the title as it appeared upon the deed. And if one purchase of another who had himself purchased without notice, he would have the rights of his vendor, though cognizant himself of the mistake.³ Courts have reformed an absolute deed into a mortgage, the condition having been accidentally omitted.⁴ In another case, a spring of water not having been excepted, by mistake, in a grant of land, as it should have been, the court compelled the grantee to quitclaim the use of it to his grantor.⁵ But it is only when material stipulations are erroneously framed, or wholly omitted by accident, mistake, or fraud, that equity will reform instruments, and make them conform to the original intention and agreement of the parties. If, therefore, an important reservation is omitted in a deed by consent of the parties, the grantee agreeing orally that the grantor should have the thing reserved, the court will not reform the deed by inserting the requisite clause.⁶ It is not, however, necessary that the deed should, in terms, convey the land or thing intended to be granted, if such grant is implied

¹ *Canedey v. Marcy*, 13 Gray, 373.

² *Metcalf v. Putnam*, 9 Allen, 97.

³ *Prescott v. Hawkins*, 16 N. H. 122, 127. See *Gray v. Hornbeck*, 31 Mo. 400.

⁴ *Adams v. Stevens*, 49 Me. 362.

⁵ *Brown v. Lamphear*, 35 Verm. 260; Story, Eq., Redf. ed., § 138.

⁶ *Andrew v. Spurr*, 8 Allen, 416; Story, Eq. § 154.

from what is described. Thus, a grant of the rents, issues and profits of a tract of land, is the grant of the land itself. If the grant be of the uses of, and dominion over land, it carries the land itself.¹

24. The object of the descriptive part of the grant is, to define what the parties intend, the one to convey, the other to receive, and, with the use of proper care in this respect, there would be little occasion for rules of construction for this part of a deed. But it has been found necessary to resort to many rules for determining the legal meaning and intention of such parties, some of which may seem to be artificial, but, from general use, have been adopted as canons of construction.² One of these is, that a deed is to be construed with reference to the actual, rightful state of the property at the time of its execution. The parties are supposed to refer to this for a definition of the terms made use of in their deed.³ In construing a deed, the court places itself, as nearly as possible, in the situation of the contracting parties, and their intent will be ascertained in the same manner as in the case of any other contract. If the intention is not then apparent from the deed, resort is to be had to the rules of construction, which gives greater effect to those things about which the law presumes the parties are the least liable to make a mistake. But arbitrary rules are not to be invoked, if the intention of the parties can be plainly discovered without their aid.⁴ Grants are to be construed according to the subject-matter, and the natural presumptions arising from their terms, and thus to render them an exposition of a rational intention. If the grant, for example, be to dig coals, it implies that the grantee is to have them. If it is to dig an aqueduct, he would have no right to the earth excavated.⁵ It

¹ Co. Lit. 4 b; *Caldwell v. Fulton*, 31 Penn. St. 484; *Clement v. Youngman*, 40 Penn. St. 344.

² *Walls v. Preston*, 25 Cal. 65.

³ *Richardson v. Palmer*, 38 N. H. 218; *Dunklee v. Wilton R. R.* 4 Foster, 489; *Stanley v. Greene*, 12 Cal. 148; *Pollard v. Maddox*, 28 Ala. 325, 326. See *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 493, and note, 525; *Adams v. Frothingham*, 3 Mass. 352; *Rider v. Thompson*, 23 Me. 244; *Hall v. Lund*, 1 H. & Colt. 684, per *Marten, B.*; *Karmuller v. Kratz*, 18 Iowa, 356; *Lane v. Thompson*, 43 N. H. 324; *Abbott v. Abbott*, 51 Me. 581.

⁴ *Kimball v. Temple*, 25 Cal. 449.

⁵ *Lyman v. Arnold*, 5 Mason, 198.

is the duty of the court to construe a deed. But it is the duty of the jury to apply its terms, when thus construed, to the land in question, to ascertain whether the premises in question are within the description.¹ Some of the cases in which these rules have been applied, were as follows: One granted all the land which a certain "mill-dam flows," and it was held to cover all the land it flowed when in use, and not to be limited to the particular state of water at the date of the deed, the stream, in fact, being then hardly above its banks.² On the other hand, a grant of "a mill privilege," with a right to flow the water to a certain point, restricts the grantee from flowing it any higher, although such flowing would greatly benefit the privilege.³ One conveyed an undivided half of an estate to A, and at a subsequent time conveyed the other undivided half to him, and took back a mortgage of "all the real estate" he had that day conveyed. It was held to be a mortgage of the entire land, the words "real estate" being used to describe the land, and not the interest in it which the mortgagee had conveyed by his deed.⁴ The parties, in describing what was granted, used the word "farm," and it was held not to be restricted to one distinct parcel, but to embrace "all such premises as have been let together," as used in the English sense, and it is used in a corresponding sense in America, in respect to premises used and occupied together.⁵ In a case in Texas, where one granted another an hundred acres of land out of a larger tract, without describing it by metes and bounds, the court held that the grantee might select and locate his hundred acres in any part of this tract.⁶ But the court of Illinois held a grant of thirty acres out of a larger parcel, but without giving any boundaries, void for uncertainty.⁷ Where one owning lands in C, and also a right to enforce a condition subsequent, by entry for condition broken, the condition not having yet been broken, mortgaged all his lands and all his right and claim to land in C, it was held not to carry this possibility of reversion.⁸

¹ *Bell v. Woodward*, 46 N. H. 337.

² *Morse v. Marshall*, 11 Allen, 230.

³ *Pray v. Great Falls Co.* 38 N. H. 442.

⁴ *Carpenter v. Millard*, 38 Verm. 9.

⁵ *Bell v. Woodward*, *sup.*

⁶ *Wofford v. McKinna*, 23 Tex. 45.

⁷ *Shackleford v. Bailey*, 35 Ill. 391. See vol. 1, p. *415.

⁸ *Richardson v. Cambridge*, 2 Allen, 118.

Among the most prominent of these, is the rule, that where a thing is granted, all the means to attain it are also granted, and all its fruits and effects pass with the thing as appurtenant or belonging to it, though not specially named.¹ The maxim embodying this rule and its translation, as given by Broom, is, "*cuiusque aliquis quid concedit, concedere videtur, et id sine quo res ipsa esse non potuit*. Whoever grants a thing is supposed also, tacitly, to grant that without which the grant itself would be of no effect."² And this is sometimes construed to carry land itself.³ There are various illustrations of this proposition to be found in the cases which have been decided. Thus, if one grant a parcel of land which is surrounded by his other lands, he thereby grants a right to pass over his land to reach the parcel granted, if it is *necessary* in order to its enjoyment.⁴ And the converse of the proposition is maintained, that if one sells land which surrounds his other land, and can only reach the latter by passing over that which he has [*623] granted, he will have a right thus to pass, though no right of way is reserved.⁵

25. So the grant of land passes with it all *usual and accustomed* ways, as appurtenant easements, whether named or not. But in order to pass as appurtenant, the way must, as a general proposition, be an *existing easement*, in the technical sense of this word, meaning, thereby, a right to use another's land for special and temporary purposes, in connection with land for the use and enjoyment of which the right is exercised.⁶ In one case, where a grantor had two parcels, A and B, and used a way over A to reach B, and then granted B "and ap-

¹ Shep. Touch. 89; 4 Cruise, Dig. 265; Pomfret v. Ricroft, 1 Wms. Saund. 323; Broom. Max. 362.

² Liford's case, 11 Rep. 52; Broom, Max. 362.

³ Sheets v. Selden, 2 Wall. U. S. 187.

⁴ Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 89, and note, 96; Broom, Max. 362; Pomfret v. Ricroft, 1 Wms. Saund. 323 a, note.

⁵ Brigham v. Smith, 4 Gray, 297; Broom, Max. 362; 3 Kent, Com. 422; Packer v. Welsted, 2 Sid. 39; Dutton v. Tayler, 2 Lutw. 1487; ante, p. *31; Washburn, Easements, *32, and cases cited.

⁶ Shep. Touch. 96; Broom, Max. 362; Leonard v. White, 7 Mass. 6; Jackson v. Hathaway, 15 Johns. 447, 454; Harris v. Elliott, 10 Pet. 25, 54; Whalley v. Thompson, 1 Bos. & P. 371; Kent v. Waite, 10 Pick. 138; Murphy v. Campbell, 4 Penn. St. 484; Pickering v. Stapler, 5 S. & R. 107.

purtenances," it was held, that the way, which had thus been used, passed with the estate B.¹

26. So the grant of a mill carries the use of the water by which it is worked, the flood-gates, dam, and all things necessary for its use, as well as the soil and freehold of the land on which it stands, and that over which it projects, and such grant may embrace land adjoining it, which is necessary for its use, and is actually used with the mill. It would include, also, a right to build and maintain a dam.² The adjacent land, in such case, does not pass as *appurtenant* to, but as *parcel* of, the principal thing granted.³ The same rule applies in making a partition between tenants in common.⁴ The grant of a "mill site," or a "mill privilege," carries the land itself, with the use of the water and appendages belonging to the mill. But it gives no right to use a reservoir, when the grant is by metes and bounds, which do not include the reservoir.⁵ So the grant of a house passes the land on which it stands.⁶ And a grant of a dwelling-house and "out-buildings belonging thereto," not only carries the land on which they stand, but includes a barn which was used with the house, with the land under it.⁷ By the grant of a "rope-walk," such land of the grantor passes as is actually used with it.⁸ So the grant of "a well," carries the land itself which it occupies, though the grantor reserves the right to use the pump therein. The term "house," or "cottage," or "wharf," or "town pound," when granted and

¹ James v. Plant, 5 A. & E. 749.

² Thompson v. Banks, 43 N. H. 540.

³ Shep. Touch. 89, 90; Allen v. Scott, 21 Pick. 25; Blake v. Clark, 6 Me. 436; Whitney v. Olney, 3 Mason, 280; Forbush v. Lombard, 13 Met. 109. See post, as to exception of a mill, or house, &c. out of a grant. Bardwell v. Ames, 22 Pick. 333, 358; Blaines v. Chambers, 1 S. & R. 169; Swartz v. Swartz, 4 Penn. St. 353, 359. See Murphy v. Campbell, 4 Penn. St. 480; Hathorn v. Stinson, 10 Me. 224; Atkins v. Bordman, 2 Met. 463; Rackley v. Sprague, 17 Me. 281; Washb. Ease. *34, *35; Thompson v. Banks, 43 N. H. 540.

⁴ Munroe v. Stickney, 48 Me. 458. See Seavey v. Jones, 43 N. H. 441, as to the effect of a deed by one tenant in common of an undivided half of certain land, "with the mill," &c. It passed only an undivided half of the mill, &c.

⁵ Moore v. Fletcher, 16 Me. 63; Crosby v. Bradbury, 20 Me. 61; Jackson v. Vermilyea, 6 Cow. 677; Washb. Ease. 35, 36; Brace v. Yale, 4 Allen, 393.

⁶ Shep. Touch. 90.

⁷ Woodman v. Smith, 53 Maine, 81.

⁸ Davis v. Handy, 37 N. H. 65.

used as a general term of description, carries the land which is thereby occupied. Such would be the case with the grant of a "pool," or a "pit;" it would pass the land as well as the water in it.¹

27. If a man grants to another a right to dig a trench in his land, and lay a pipe for conveying water, he thereby grants a *right to enter, dig, and repair the same.² [*624] And if he grant a right to dig a canal through his premises, it does not pass a right of property in the rocks or soil excavated, unless they may be used in constructing the canal.³ So if he grants a piece of land to build a mill-dam upon, with a right to build such dam and maintain it for a water privilege, of a certain height, he thereby grants the right, if necessary, to place a part of this dam upon his adjacent land.⁴ The grant or reservation of "a way," or "a road," embraces only an easement, but not the soil, although the boundaries of the same are given. And the same rule would apply to any grant of a non-continuous right to, or use of, a thing.⁵

28. So if one grants the mines in his land, he grants, thereby, the right to dig for, and work them.⁶ So where a grantor excepted out of his grant of the land, all coal mines, with sufficient *way leave*, and *stay leave*, to and from the mines, and the right of sinking pits, it was held that, as incident to the liberty to sink pits, the right to fix such machinery as would be necessary to drain the mines and draw coal from the pits, was reserved, and that a pond to supply the engine, and an engine-house, being essential accessories to such engine, were lawfully constructed by the grantor upon the premises.⁷ This case will serve to illustrate the extent to which courts are

¹ *Johnson v. Rayner*, 6 Gray, 107; *Shep. Touch.* 94; *Whitney v. Olney*, 3 Mason, 282; *Wooley v. Groton*, 2 Cush. 305; *Co. Lit.* 5.

² *Shep. Touch.* 96; *Broom, Max.* 364; *Pickering v. Stapler*, 5 S. & R. 110.

³ *Washb. Ease.* 39, 2d ed.

⁴ *Dryden v. Jepherson*, 18 Pick. 385, 390; *Swartz v. Swartz*, 4 Penn. St. 353

⁵ *Graves v. Amoskeag Co.* 44 N. H. 464; *Leavitt v. Towle*, 8 N. H. 97; *Peck v. Smith*, 1 Conn. 103; *Jamaica Pond v. Chandler*, 9 Allen, 164.

⁶ *Shep. Touch.* 96.

⁷ *Dand v. Kingscote*, 6 M. & W. 174; *Broom, Max.* 365. See *Bardwell v. Ames*, 22 Pick. 383, 358; *Green v. Putnam*, 8 Cush. 21; *Turner v. Reynolds*, 23 Penn. St. 199.

disposed to carry the doctrine of implied grants when it is necessary to carry any direct grant into effect. And another example is found in the case of a grant by one, through whose land a stream flowed, to an owner above, of a right to throw the washings of ore into the stream and to deposit themselves on the grantor's meadow below. The consequence was that, in time, the meadow became so raised that the washings flowed off on to his adjoining pasture. But it was held, that the right to do this passed as an incident to the principal grant.¹

29. But while a grant of the principal passes the incident, in the manner above suggested, the converse of the proposition is not true. The maxim is "*accessorium non ducit sed sequitur suum principale*."² Thus, the grant of a reversion carries a rent. But the grant of a rent does not carry the reversion.³ So a grant of land carries all mines within it, if not previously granted, but the grant of a man's lead or iron mines, for instance, does not pass the land.⁴

30. Another rule is, that, where the grant is a general one, whatever belongs to the thing granted, as a constituent part or element, passes thereby. Thus, the grant of a house, passes the doors, windows, locks, keys, window-blinds, and the like, although, at the time of the grant, they may have been severed from the same for a temporary purpose, if they had [*625] previously *been fitted and applied.⁵ So the grant of a "saw-mill," with privileges and appurtenances, passes the machinery used in it, and would include a mill-chain, *dogs* and *bars* therein, by which logs are drawn in and secured for sawing. And, generally, whatever things are fitted and prepared to be used with real estate, and have been applied thereto, pass with the realty to which they have thus become accessory.⁶

31. So the grant of land, carries houses, trees, and everything standing or growing upon the surface, with mines, quarries, and whatever is contained beneath the surface, though it is competent for the owner to convey his mines, by a separate and distinct grant, so as to create one freehold in the soil, and

¹ *Bushnell v. Proprietors, &c.* 31 Conn. 150.

² *Broom, Max.* 368; *Shep. Touch.* 89; *Worcester v. Green*, 2 Pick. 425, 426.

³ *Shep. Touch.* 89; *Broom, Max.* 370.

⁴ *Shep. Touch.* 96.

⁵ *Shep. Touch.* 90.

⁶ *Farrar v. Stackpole*, 6 Me. 154.

another in the mines.¹ Questions have arisen and been variously settled, as to how far it is competent for a grantor of premises to except by parol, what is growing thereon at the time. In one case the court held that he might thus reserve growing corn.² But in another case, where the grantor reserved, in that way, wine plants growing upon the premises, it was held to be inoperative.³ And a deed, in the following terms, was held to pass such an interest in the mines under the grantor's land, as distinguished from a right of easement in another's land, "also the full right, title, and privilege of digging and taking away stone-coal, to any extent the said (grantee) may think proper to do, or cause to be done, under any of the land now owned and occupied by the (grantor)." The *habendum* and covenants were as to "the aforesaid right to the stone-coal," and "the right of stone-coal hereby given." And it was held, that the grantee might, by his deed, convey an undivided share of this coal to another.⁴ And the same is true of trees growing upon land.⁵ The clause, therefore, often inserted in deeds, conveying the buildings standing upon the granted premises, can be of no avail, except as a part of the description of what is granted.⁶ Upon the same principle manure made upon a farm in the ordinary course of husbandry, and lying in heaps or manure-beds upon it, will pass by a grant of the farm, although susceptible of being easily removed and sold.⁷ In respect to mines of gold and silver, there was,

¹ *Mott v. Palmer*, 1 Comst. 564, 569; *Goodrich v. Jones*, 2 Hill, 142; *Noble v. Bosworth*, 19 Pick. 314; *Shep. Touch.* 90; ante, vol. 1. p. *5; *Terhaw v. Ebber-son*, 1 Penn. 726. But see *Smith v. Johnston*, 1 Penn. 471, as to growing corn not passing. But Kent holds, that growing crops do pass by a grant of the land, 4 Kent, Com. 468, and is sustained by authority, as well as by well-settled principles. *Foot v. Colvin*, 3 Johns. 216; *Kittredge v. Wood*, 3 N. H. 503; *Chapman v. Long*, 10 Ind. 465; *McIlvaine v. Harris*, 20 Mo. 457; *Turner v. Reynolds*, 23 Penn. St. 199, mines.

² *Baker v. Jordan*, 3 Ohio. N. S. 438; post, *645.

³ *Wintermute v. Light*, 46 Barb. 283. See also *Wilkins v. Vashbinder*, 7 Watts. 378; *Gibbons v. Dillingham*, 5 Eng. (Ark.) 9.

⁴ *Caldwell v. Fulton*, 31 Penn. St. 475. See *Clement v. Youngman*, 40 Penn. St. 346.

⁵ *Clap v. Draper*, 4 Mass. 266.

⁶ *Crosby v. Parker*, 4 Mass. 110.

⁷ *Daniels v. Pond*, 31 Pick. 367, 371; *Fay v. Muzzey*, 13 Gray, 53; *Goodrich v. Jones*, 2 Hill, 142; *Lewis v. Lyman*, 22 Pick. 436, 442; *Wetherbee v. Ellison*, 19 Verm. 379; ante, vol. 1. p. *6.

by the English, as well as the Continental law, this peculiarity, that they belonged to the crown, though found in the land of an individual proprietor.¹ In "the charter of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay," there is, in addition to the ordinary description of the lands granted, the clause, "and also all mines and minerals, as well royal mines of gold and silver, as other mines and minerals whatsoever." It appears, from Chancellor Kent's Commentaries, that the statutes of New York assert the right of the State as sovereign over mines, to the extent of the English statutes. In a case decided by Mr. Justice Clayton of Georgia, which is found in a note to the same work,² it was held, that the mines contained in the public lands in Georgia, passed with the lands to individuals, upon a grant thereof, unless expressly excepted. And such is held to be the law in California. And it is further held, in that State, that though the gold and silver mines belonged to the crown of Spain, and passed with the sovereignty and the soil to the government of Mexico, and, subsequently, by treaty to the United States, they were, in the hands of the latter government, mere incidents to the ownership of the soil itself; and when the territory became a State, the United States continued to hold the public lands as proprietors by the right of ownership, and their title to the mines accordingly passed with the lands when conveyed to individual purchasers.³

32. Although it is an undoubted proposition, that whatever is properly *appurtenant* to the principal thing granted, passes with it, it is not always easy to apply the term so as to determine, in a given case, whether the thing under consideration is appurtenant or not. A thing appendant or appurtenant, is defined to be "a thing used with and related to, or dependent upon another thing *more worthy*, and agreeing in its nature and quality with the thing whereunto it is appendant or appurtenant." It results, therefore, that land can never be appurtenant to other land, or pass with it, as belonging to it.⁴ It was

¹ *Queen v. Northumberland*, 1 Plowd. 310, 336; 2 Inst. 578.

² 3 Kent, Com. 378 and note.

³ *Moore v. Smaw*, 17 Cal. 199, 222; *Boggs v. Merced Co.* 14 Cal. 279, 375.

⁴ *Leonard v. White*, 7 Mass. 6, 8; *Harris v. Elliott*, 10 Pet. 25, 54; *Co. Lit.* 121 b; *Jackson v. Hathaway*, 15 Johns. 447, 454; *Blaine's Lessee v. Chambers*, 1

accordingly held, in the case of *Leonard v. White*, just cited, that where one granted a mill, with its appurtenances, it did not pass the soil of a way which had been long used for access to *the mill, though a right to pass over it, [*627] as a way, would have passed thereby.¹ Among the things to which the term "appurtenant," or "appurtenance" is applied, are *easements* or *servitudes* used and enjoyed with the lands for whose benefit they were created. And in respect to these, the language of the court in one case, is: "Nothing is more clear than that, under the word 'appurtenances,' according to its legal sense, an easement which has become extinct, or which does not exist in point of law by reason of unity of ownership, does not pass."² A grant of a thing will include whatever the grantor had power to convey, which is reasonably necessary to the enjoyment of the thing granted. Thus a grant of a house with appurtenances, passes a conduit by which water is conducted to it. But it would not pass a way of convenience when there is another way of access, unless specifically mentioned.³ But when there is a grant of a servitude in one parcel which is not designed to be enjoyed with another parcel granted in the same deed, it does not become appurtenant to the second parcel. Thus, where one granted twenty acres of land, and a right to dig ore in another parcel of ten acres, in the same deed, the right to dig the ore did not thereby become appurtenant to the other parcel, not being necessary or intended to be used therewith.⁴ And whether a thing shall pass as appurtenant to another, depends upon the condition of the latter estate at the time it is granted, and how far it is necessary to its enjoyment.⁵

33. But land or buildings may be so necessary to the use and enjoyment of that which is granted, as to pass with it, where they are, in effect, *parcel* of the thing granted, necessary

S. & R. 169; *Tyler v. Hammond*, 11 Pick. 193; *Ammidown v. Granite Bank*, 8 Allen, 293.

¹ *Hoboken Land, &c. Co. v. Kerrigan*, 30 N. J., Law, 16.

² *Plant v. James*, 5 B. & Ad. 791; *Washb. Eas.* *22, *38, *39, *161, and cases cited.

³ *Parker v. Bennett*, 11 Allen, 386; *Brown v. Nichols*, Moore, 682.

⁴ *Grubb v. Guildford*, 4 Watts, 223, 244, 246. See *Brace v. Yale*, 4 Allen, 393.

⁵ *Gayetty v. Bethune*, 14 Mass. 49; *McDonald v. Lindall*, 3 Rawle, 492.

to its enjoyment, and intended to pass with it like the other parts or parcels, though termed appurtenant, and described accordingly. Thus, a devise of a "paper-mill, together with all the machinery and appurtenances to said mill," was held to pass all the land under the mill, and necessary for the use of it, and commonly used with it, as *parcel* thereof, on the ground, that though land cannot be appurtenant to land, so as to pass by that form of expression, yet, where the intention is clearly expressed that land should pass under that name, the law will give effect to the grant.¹ But the grant of a certain parcel of land, with a description of the same, together with a mill-house, mill-dam, races, watercourses and other appurtenances, did not pass the soil and freehold of the land flowed by the mill-pond.² The same principle was applied in regard to land under a house and around it, under a devise of the house, the same having been used with it, and being convenient for its enjoyment.³ So with land to the centre of a highway, where the parcel adjoining the highway is conveyed, it passes as *parcel*, and not as *appurtenant*.⁴

34. The term "messuage," is often used in describing what is intended to be conveyed, but seems to be very indefinite in its extent, in some cases including not only the dwelling-house, which always seems to be implied in the term, but whatever buildings are included within the curtilage around the house, and the curtilage itself, orchard, garden, &c., and even, in some cases, a farm, or a manor, when clearly intended to be described in that way. And the grant of a messuage or a house,

¹ *Whitney v. Olney*, 3 Mason, 280; *Swartz v. Swartz*, 4 Penn. St. 353; *Archer v. Bennett*, 1 Lev. 131; *Bacon v. Bowdoin*, 22 Pick. 401; *Doane v. Broad Street Assn.* 6 Mass. 334; *Case of a Private Road*, 1 Ashm. 417; *Greenwood v. Murdock*, 9 Gray, 20; *Johnson v. Rayner*, 6 Gray, 110; *Esty v. Baker*, 48 Me. 495; *Amidown v. Granite Bank*, 8 Allen, 292; *Avon Co. v. Andrews*, 30 Conn. 476.

² *Bartholomew v. Edwards*, 1 Houst. 25.

³ *Eliot v. Carter*, 12 Pick. 436; *Murphy v. Campbell*, 4 Penn. St. 480, case of a privy passing with a house. *Amidown v. Ball*, 8 Allen, 293; *Wilson v. Hunter*, 14 Wis. 687; *Gibson v. Brockway*, 8 N. H. 465; *Maddox v. Goddard*, 15 Me. 218; *Moore v. Fletcher*, 16 Me. 66; *Polden v. Bastard*, 4 B. & Smith, 257.

⁴ *Webber v. Eastern R. R.* 2 Met. 147, 151. See also *Doe v. Collins*, 2 T. R. 498; *Allen v. Scott*, 21 Pick. 25; *Blake v. Clark*, 6 Me. 436; *Smith v. Martin*, 2 Wms. Saund. 400, 401, n.; *Co. Litt.* 121, 122; *Codman v. Evans*, 1 Allen, 443.

and all lands thereunto appertaining, will pass all lands usually occupied therewith.¹

35. It should be borne in mind, as a rule in reading and construing *deeds, that no regard is had to punctuation, since no estate ought to depend upon the insertion or omission of a comma or semicolon. And although stops are sometimes used, they are not regarded in the construction or meaning of the instrument.²

36. In a large proportion of conveyances, the difficulties above considered are obviated by a minute and particular description of the thing intended to be granted. But in attempting to give such description, it is often found that its parts are so inconsistent, and its terms so vague, that rules of construction have to be resorted to in order to give a determinate form to what the parties have themselves failed to make clear and intelligible. In applying the principles of construction where the terms of the description are uncertain, it is a familiar rule, that inasmuch as the fault is assumed to be in the grantor, if he has left the point doubtful, it shall be construed most favorably for the grantee. The grantor shall not take advantage of a difficulty which he has himself created. But this rule, however, is the last which courts apply, and is never resorted to, so long as a satisfactory result can be reached by other rules of analysis and construction.³

37. When, as above suggested, the parts of a description in a deed are found inconsistent with each other, the courts always give effect to every part of the deed, if it is possible, consistently with the rules of law. And if this cannot be done, they then examine and see if there is enough of the consistent and intelligible portions of the same to give effect to the intention of the parties, and if so, they reject what is repugnant to the general intention of the deed, or to any obvious particular intention of the party. Upon the principle above stated, if there

¹ *Termes de la Ley*, "Mease"; *Shep. Touch.* 94; *Smith v. Martin*, 2 Wms. *Saund.* 401 and note; *Woodman v. Smith*, 53 Me. 81.

² *Wms. Real Prop.* 161; *Ewing v. Burnett*, 11 Pet. 54; *Doe v. Martin*, 4 T. R. 65; 3 *Dane*, Abr. 558.

³ *Worthington v. Hylyer*, 4 Mass. 205; *Marshall v. Niles*, 8 Conn. 469; *Carroll v. Norwood*, 5 Harr. & J. 155, 163; *Clough v. Bowman*, 15 N. H. 504; *Sanborn v. Clough*, 40 N. H. 330; *Vance v. Fore*, 24 Cal. 446; *Dodge v. Walley*, 22 Cal. 228.

are two descriptions in a deed of the land conveyed, and they do not coincide, the grantee is at liberty to elect that which is most favorable to him.¹ But if there are two clauses in a deed, which are so repugnant as not to stand together, the first is held to prevail over the last. But between an introductory clause and the granting clause, the latter determines what interest is intended to be granted.² And where an instrument is partly written and partly printed, and the written clause is repugnant to the printed one, the former governs.³ But, if the repugnancy of the parts be such as to render the intention of the parties unintelligible, it defeats the grant itself. It has accordingly been held, that when the description of the estate intended to be conveyed, "includes several particulars, all of which are necessary to ascertain it, no estate will pass except such as agrees with every particular of the description. But if the description is sufficient to ascertain the estate, although the estate cannot agree with all the particulars of the description, yet it will pass."⁴ If the estate cannot be ascertained by the description in the grant, the deed fails altogether. Thus, where the terms of the grant recited that it was part of a certain patent bounded by other lands named, "and supposed to contain four hundred acres, whereof about one hundred acres were struck off to J. W." — Now know ye, &c., "do grant, bargain, and sell the before-mentioned premises to the said J. W." it was held, to be void for want of a sufficient description to show what premises were granted.⁵

38. Numerous illustrations might be given of the application of the foregoing rule, to some of which reference will be made, though, before this is done, the reader should be apprised of a maxim of pretty general application, *falsa demonstratio non nocet*, under which, if the instrument defines, with convenient certainty, what is intended to pass by it, a subsequent erroneous

¹ *Esty v. Baker*, 50 Me. 331; *Melvin v. Proprs. Locks, &c.* 8 Met. 27.

² *Webb v. Webb*, 29 Ala. 606.

³ *McNear v. McComber*, 18 Iowa, 17.

⁴ 23 Am. Jur. 279-281, by Judge *Metcalf*; *Broom, Max.* 497, 498; *Law v. Hempstead*, 10 Conn. 23; *Corbin v. Healy*, 20 Pick. 514; *Bass v. Mitchell*, 22 Tex. 285, 294; *Peck v. Mallams*, 10 N. Y. 532; *Bend v. Fay*, 8 Allen, 212; *Abbott v. Abbott*, 53 Me. 360, 361.

⁵ *Peck v. Mallams*, 10 N. Y. 630. See *Hill v. Mowry*, 6 Gray, 551.

addition will not vitiate it.¹ Thus an officer's deed was of "all the right and title" of A to certain lands, "being a leasehold unexpired," when in fact he owned a fee, it was held to pass the fee.² And a deed of all the interest of A in lot No. 7, which came to him from S. J., when, in fact, his title was from J. J., and not from S. J., it was held to pass all his interest in that lot.³ Thus, if one grant all his lands in D., which he had of J. S., none other will pass, though he has other lands in D. So "my house and land in S., occupied by me," will not contain an adjoining one there in the occupancy of a tenant.⁴ Nor would a grant of "my homestead, containing 200 acres of land, being the same now occupied by me"; pass lots then in the occupation of tenants at will, though included in the two hundred acres. Nor will parol evidence be admitted in these cases, to show that the grantor intended to convey these lots.⁵ But if he describes the estate which he intends to convey as all his lands in D. called "the Grange," which he had of J. S., and he has an estate of that name in D., but did not have it of J. S., the estate will, nevertheless, pass, and the false part of the description will be rejected.⁶ A case requiring a compliance with all the particulars in a description is, that where a grant was made of all the lands of the grantor in B. and elsewhere in the county of S., in the tenure of J. D. Nothing would pass except lands in the county of S. and in the tenure of J. D.⁷ Whereas, by a grant of all the grantor's lands in D. containing ten acres, when, in fact, the parcel that he owns there contains twenty, the whole parcel passes.⁸ One other rule may be stated in this connection, which is, that where the premises of a grant are special and express, they cannot be restrained or frustrated by a distinct clause in the deed, though it is otherwise where the premises are general and implied. Thus, if the description

¹ *Broom*, Max. 490; *Crosby v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 61, 67; *Jackson v. Clark*, 7 Johns. 223; *Parker v. Kane*, 22 How. 1; *Parks v. Loomis*, 6 Gray, 467; *Morrow v. Willard*, 30 Verm. 118; *Spiller v. Scribner*, 36 Verm. 246; *Hibbard v. Hurlburt*, 10 Verm. 173.

² *Dodge v. Walley*, 22 Cal. 224.

³ *Hathaway v. Juneau*, 15 Wis. 264.

⁴ *Brown v. Saltonstall*, 3 Me. 423; *Warren v. Cogswell*, 10 Gray, 76.

⁵ *Shep. Touch.* 90.

⁶ *Shep. Touch.* 99.

⁷ *Shep. Touch.* 99.

⁸ *Shep. Touch.* 100.

in the deed be general, and is followed by a reference to one that is particular, the latter limits and defines the terms of the grant.¹ This may be illustrated by the case of *Smith v. Strong*, where the deed professed to grant several tracts of land [*630] described by numbers **"in the Boston Purchase,"* among which were mentioned lots 15 and 43, and to this description was added, *"the foregoing being the same and all the lands lying in the county of B, which were devised to me by the will of A."* The lots named as above, in fact, were situated north of the *"Boston Purchase,"* but adjoining it. It was held, that they passed by the deed, for the words of general description of the granted premises are controlled and rendered certain by the particular description of the two lots.² As the principle intended to be illustrated, can be explained better by example than in any other form, the following cases have been selected from numerous others. In one or two this rule is stated.³ If there is some land wherein *all* the demonstrations are true, and wherein part are false, they shall be *"intended to pass only those lands wherein the circumstances are true."* In this case, *"all my leasehold, homestead, lands, and tenements at H., containing about 170 acres, held under M., and now in the occupation of F. B., as tenant to me";* were devised, and the question was, if it carried a certain piece of six acres, which answered the foregoing description, except in not being in the occupation of F. B. It was held, that the last-mentioned piece did not pass. But if the devise had been in express terms, of the six-acre parcel, though it stated it to be in the occupation of F. B., it would have carried the parcel, and the descriptive clause would have been rejected as *falsa demonstratio*. So where the deed conveyed all that messuage with the lands, &c. now or late in the occupation of B., which messuage, lands, &c. are called, and known, and described by the several names, and contain the several quantities by admeasurement following. Then followed a particular description of sundry parcels, but it

¹ *Barney v. Miller*, 18 Iowa, 466.

² *Smith v. Strong*, 14 Pick. 128. See *Whiting v. Dewey*, 15 Pick. 428; *Wins v. Cabot*, 18 Pick. 553; *Cutler v. Tufts*, 3 Pick. 272. See *Dana v. Middlesex Bank*, 10 Met. 250; *Howell v. Saule*, 5 Mason, 410.

³ *Morrell v. Fisher*, 4 Exch. 591; where numerous cases are cited and examined.

omitted three parcels which had always formed a part of the farm, and had been occupied by B. ; and it was held, that these did not pass, not coming within the parcels particularly described.¹ A deed is not to be held void for uncertainty if, by any reasonable construction, it can be made available. Parol evidence cannot be admitted to contradict or control the language of a deed: But latent ambiguities may be explained by such evidence. Facts existing at the time of the conveyance and prior thereto, may be proved by parol evidence with a view of establishing a particular line as being the one contemplated by the parties when, by the terms of the deed, such line is left uncertain.² Few cases, however, more fully illustrate these principles of construction than that of *Worthington v. Hylyer*, where the grant was of the "farm" in W., on which the grantor lived, "being lot No. 17, in the first division of lands, containing one hundred acres, with my dwelling-house standing thereon, bounding west on land of J. C., northerly by a pond, east of lot No. 18, south of lot No. 19, having a highway through it." Now, in fact, No. 17 had no house upon it, nor any road through it, and only a little part of it was clear or susceptible of cultivation, and was nearly worthless, and only answered to the description in that it was bounded by a pond. In fact, the grantor's house stood upon another lot, separated from No. 17, by No. 18 and a highway, and occupied by him as a farm. And the court held, that as it was, obviously, the intent of the parties to convey the farm and dwelling-house, this specific reference to No. 17 as a description of it, was false, and must be rejected, and that the farm did pass.³

39. Sometimes the quantity of land conveyed is mentioned in the deed. But, independently of an express averment or covenant as to quantity, this is always regarded as a part of

¹ *Griffiths v. Penson*, Exch. 1863, 25 Law Rep. 552. See also *Barton v. Dawes*, 10 C. B. 261; *Llewellyn v. Jersey*, 11 M. & W. 183.

² *Crafts v. Hibbard*, 4 Met. 452; *Abbott v. Abbott*, 51 Me. 582; *Bond v. Fay*, 12 Allen, 88.

³ *Worthington v. Hylyer*, 4 Mass. 198. See *Bosworth v. Sturtevant*, 2 Cush. 392, 393; *Fancher v. DeMontegre*, 1 Head, 40; *Lush v. Druse*, 4 Wend. 313; *Johnson v. Simpson*, 36 N. H. 91; *Parks v. Loomis*, 6 Gray, 467, where a specific monument was excluded as being a *falsa demonstratio*. *Melvin v. Propri. Locks*, &c. 5 Met. 28.

the description merely, and will be rejected if it be inconsistent with the actual area of the premises, if the same is indicated and ascertained by known monuments and boundaries. It aids, but ordinarily does not control, the description of the granted premises.¹ And this was applied in the sale of lands by public commissioners, as, where the parcel sold was described by bounds as containing 174 acres, the whole passed although ascertained to contain 214 acres.²

[*631] *40. So the admeasurement of distances, and the direction of lines in reference to the points of compass mentioned in the deed, are often made a part of the description of the premises intended to be granted, and, in some cases, where the lines are so short as to be evidently susceptible of entire accuracy in their admeasurement, and are defined in such a manner as to indicate an exercise of this accuracy in describing the premises, such description is regarded with great confidence as a means of ascertaining what is intended to be conveyed. But, ordinarily, surveys are so loosely made, instruments so liable to be out of order, and admeasurements, especially in rough or uneven land or forests, so liable to be inaccurate, that the courses and distances given in a deed, are regarded as more or less uncertain, and always give place, in questions of doubt or discrepancy, to known monuments and boundaries that are referred to in the deed as indicating and identifying the land.³ But if courses and distances are given but no monuments are given or called for in the deed, parol evidence is not competent to control these. What constitutes a boundary in a deed, is a fact for the jury, and may be proved by any kind of evidence which is competent to prove

¹ *Mann v. Pearson*, 2 Johns. 37, 41; *Snow v. Chapman*, 1 Root, 528; *Powell v. Clark*, 5 Mass. 355, 357; 1 United States Dig. "Boundaries," § 41; *Commissioner v. Thompson*, 4 M'Cord, 434; *Jackson v. Defendorf*, 1 Caines' Rep. 493; *Miller v. Bentley*, 5 Sneed, 671; *Hall v. Mayhew*, 15 Md. 551; *Wright v. Wright*, 34 Ala. 194; *Riddell v. Jackson*, 14 La. An. 135; *Stanley v. Green*, 12 Cal. 148; *Dutton v. Rust*, 22 Texas, 133; *Llewellyn v. Jersey*, 11 M. & W. 183.

² *Ward v. Crotty*, 4 Met. (Ky.) 103.

³ *Davis v. Rainsford*, 17 Mass. 207, 210, where the distance given was but a few feet, and was given in feet and inches. *Howe v. Bass*, 2 Mass. 380; *Frost v. Spaulding*, 19 Pick. 445; *M'Pherson v. Foster*, 4 Wash. C. C. 45; 1 United States Dig. "Boundaries," § 15, where cases are collected. *Lodge v. Barnett*, 46 Penn. St. 484; *Evansville v. Page*, 23 Ind. 527.

any fact.¹ The course called for in the deed was "westerly," but the monuments referred to carried it in a northwesterly course, and the latter was held to be the true line.² And this doctrine was applied where the monument was the line of a third person's land, — the true line of his land will control the courses named in the deed.³ And bounding by another's land means along the line of such land.⁴ There are, moreover, certain general rules, which courts apply in construing the descriptions given in deeds, a few of which may be noticed here. But the purpose of these rules, after all, is to ascertain the *intention* of the parties by the law terms made use of in their deeds. To do this, it is often necessary to resort to parol evidence, but this is allowed to a very limited extent only, and rarely, if ever, beyond showing the circumstances under which the deed was made,⁵ to show the meaning of technical terms of art,⁶ or to show and explain what are called latent ambiguities.⁷ It is competent to refer to parol evidence to show the definition of descriptive terms used in a deed, if in their nature ambiguous. This principle was applied to determine what the parties meant by the word "zinc" in their deed.⁸ But where the parties define in their deed what they mean by the terms they make use of, such definition will control the construction of the deed, though varying from that in common use.⁹ Thus, in *Stanley v. Green*, the court say: "That the evidence of the circumstances under which the deed was executed, is admissible, does not admit of a question. These circumstances place the court in the position of the parties, and enable it to interpret intelligently the language used by them. For this purpose extrinsic evidence must be admissible in the interpretation of every instrument, and the law will not declare the instrument void for uncertainty, until it has been examined

¹ *Opdyke v. Stephens*, 4 Dutch. 89; *Brown v. Willey*, 42 Penn. St. 309.

² *Colton v. Seavey*, 22 Cal. 496.

³ *Park v. Pratt*, 38 Verm. 552.

⁴ *Bailey v. White*, 41 N. H. 343; *Peaslee v. Gee*, 15 N. H. 273.

⁵ *Stanley v. Green*, 12 Cal. 162; *Shore v. Wilson*, 9 Cl. & Fin. 556; *Hildebrand v. Fogle*, 20 Ohio, 147, 157; 1 Greenl. Ev. § 295, 298.

⁶ *Eaton v. Smith*, 20 Pick. 150.

⁷ 1 Greenl. Ev. § 297; *Hall v. Davis*, 36 N. H. 569.

⁸ *N. J. Zinc Co. v. Boston Franklinite Co.* 15 N. J. Ch. 418, 448.

⁹ *Morrison v. Wilson*, 30 Cal. 347.

with all the light which contemporaneous facts may furnish." "It is, however, a settled rule that a deed must be construed *ex visceribus suis*. When the intent is clearly expressed, no evidence of extraneous facts or circumstances can be received to alter it." "The nature and *quantity* of the *interest* granted are always to be ascertained from the instrument itself."¹ Another rule is, that "where more than one description is given, and there is a discrepancy, that description will be adhered to as to which there is the least likelihood that a mistake could be committed, and that be rejected in regard to which mistakes are more apt to be made."² It is, accordingly, a rule of universal application, that natural, permanent objects called for in a deed, control courses and distances given.³ Among the things mentioned by the court in *Opdyke v. Stephens*, (*sup.*) which may be referred to in determining questions of boundaries, are "actual occupation, ancient reputation, the admissions of the party in possession against his interest, ancient maps and drafts, marked trees, the lines of adjoining surveys, and monuments erected at or soon after the date of the grant of adjoining surveys." These are all admissible for this purpose, though it conflicts with the courses and distances called for in the deed. The order of applying descriptions of boundaries, is, *first*, to natural objects; *second*, to artificial marks; and *third*, to courses and distances given in the deed.⁴ And courses and distances, given in a deed, can be controlled only by monuments.⁵ The court had occasion to lay down a rule in *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, to meet the case of a public grant, where three sides only of the grant could be ascertained, and the question was, if the remaining side could be ascertained? Shaw, C. J., said: "A deed is not to be held void for uncer-

¹ *Caldwell v. Fulton*, 31 Penn. St. 489. See *Bond v. Fay*, 12 Allen, 88.

² *Miller v. Cherry*, 3 Jones, Eq. 29. See *Ferris v. Coover*, 10 Cal. 628; *Melvin v. Proprs. Locks, &c.* 5 Met. 28; *Esty v. Baker*, 50 Me. 331.

³ *Brown v. Huger*, 21 How. 305; *Hall v. Davis*, 36 N. H. 569; *Murphy v. Campbell*, 4 Penn. St. 485; *Mackentile v. Savoy*, 17 S. & R. 104; *Miller v. Cherry*, 3 Jones, Eq. 29; *Colton v. Seavey*, 22 Cal. 496.

⁴ *Bolton v. Lann*, 16 Texas, 96; *Fulwood v. Graham*, 1 Rich. 497; *Ferris v. Coover*, 10 Cal. 629. See *Ogden v. Porterfield*, 34 Penn. St. 196; *Boahan v. Stapleton*, 13 Gray, 427.

⁵ *Chadbourne v. Mason*, 48 Me. 391.

tainty because the boundaries are not fully expressed, when by reasonable intendment it can be ascertained what was considered and understood by both parties, to be embraced, and intended to be embraced, in the description. The obvious and legal course, we think, is to lay down a plan on the land according to ascertained boundaries, abutments, and monuments, on these three sides, and thus see where the fourth would come; if it terminate on the sea or salt water, on a highway or public common, or on a well-established line of private property, such deficient line will be supplied by necessary intendment, and the instrument be read as if it were so expressed."¹ So where a certain quantity of land is mentioned with a given side upon the river, without the courses being given, it was held that the tract should be laid out as nearly as might be in a rectangular form, in the direction indicated from the stream, the stream forming its base line, the two sides being parallel and drawn at right angles with the general course of the stream at that point, and to extend back far enough to include the requisite quantity. If the description does not require the side opposite to the stream to be parallel with the stream, that side is to be drawn at right angles with the sides and parallel with the general direction of the stream.²

41. If, however, the boundary line is described by admeasurement, it will govern, if there are no known monuments by which to test its accuracy, although the distance be described as so many feet "more or less."³

42. In respect to courses, if the deed calls for a line running "northerly," it is said that it is to be taken as meaning a line due north.⁴ But where the grant was of the "west half" of a lot, it was held to be open to explanation by the situation of the lot when conveyed, and the manner in which the parties then occupied it, although a north and south line would mate-

¹ *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 490.

² *Hicks v. Coleman*, 25 Cal. 142, 143; *Craig v. Hawkins*, 1 Bibb. 54; *Calk v. Stribling*, 1 Bibb. 122; *Vangorden v. Jackson*, 5 Johns. 474.

³ *Blaney v. Rice*, 20 Pick. 62; *Cherry v. Slade*, 3 Murph. 82; 1 *United States Dig. "Boundaries,"* § 47; *Welch v. Phillips*, 1 McCord, 215; 4 *Greenl. Cruise, Dig.* 265, note.

⁴ *Brandt v. Ogden*, 1 Johns. 158. See *Jackson v. Reeves*, 3 Caines, 293; *Van Gorden v. Jackson*, 5 Johns. 473; *Bosworth v. Danzien*, 25 Cal. 296.

rially vary from the line as thus established.¹ So granting land reserving all the wood on the premises "south of the meadow," includes all that lies to the south of a line extending along the meadow through the premises, and is not limited to the wood lying directly south of the meadow itself.²

43. But the most reliable means of establishing what is intended to be conveyed in a deed, are the monuments therein described and referred to, as forming the boundaries of the estate. It is a universal rule that where a line is given in a deed as running from one monument to another, it is [*632] always *to be taken as straight, if not otherwise described.³ If the line run from one point to another over another point, the same is to be run straight from the first to the intermediate point, and straight from that to the other point.⁴ So that by ascertaining the monuments at the angles of a parcel of land, the boundary lines can at once be determined. So, if in the description of land a line is called for, running from an ascertained point to some natural boundary, like a stream of water, without giving the point of compass, or some known object by the stream, it is held to be a line running in the most direct and shortest course between the given point and the stream.⁵

44. Some of these monuments are natural objects, others are artificial, and one parcel of land itself may be a monument to determine the boundary and limit of another.⁶ But in such case, the boundary is to be construed to be the true line of ownership, and not that of occupancy or inclosure, if the latter be other than by the true dividing line.⁷ And such description excludes whatever has been already granted away, although

¹ *Schmitz v. Schmitz*, 19 Wis. 210.

² *Cronin v. Richardson*, 8 Allen, 423.

³ *Allen v. Kingsbury*, 16 Pick. 235, 238; *Baker v. Talbott*, 6 Mon. 179; *McCoy v. Galloway*, 3 Ohio, 382; *Nelson v. Hall*, 1 McLean, 519, in which blocks from trees marked as corners, and others marked as line trees were produced to the jury, showing the annular growth of the trees. *Burnett v. Thompson*, 6 Jones (Law), 210; *Caraway v. Chancy*, 6 Jones (Law), 364; *Jenks v. Morgan*, 6 Gray, 443.

⁴ *Hovey v. Sawyer*, 5 Allen, 585. ⁵ *Caraway v. Chancy*, 6 Jones (Law), 364.

⁶ *Flagg v. Thurston*, 13 Pick. 150; *Carroll v. Norwood*, 5 Harr. & J. 163; *Smith v. Murphy*, 1 Tayl. 303; *Bates v. Tymanson*, 13 Wend. 300.

⁷ *Northrop v. Sumney*, 27 Barb. 196; *Cornell v. Jackson*, 9 Met. 154; ante, pl. 40.

the deed may not have been recorded.¹ If a parcel is bounded "by a house," the line is at the *eaves* of the house.²

45. Among the natural objects which are often referred to as monuments in deeds, and which have been the subject of somewhat arbitrary rules, are streams and rivers, ponds, shores, beaches, highways, streets, and the like. These, of course, must exist in the nature of things, at the time of making the deed, in order to serve as monuments. But artificial monuments may be referred to in a deed, which do not then exist, but which, if afterwards fixed and established by the parties to correspond with and answer to those described, become as effectual and conclusive upon the parties as if they had been in existence when the deed was executed.³ The same principle has been applied where the line has been described as running a particular course from an established point, and if the parties have then run it out, located and marked it, and occupied to the line so marked, it is taken to be the true line, though varying from the course given in the deed, or other less certain boundaries, than the line so marked.⁴

46. In respect to streams and rivers which are not navigable, that is, in which the tide does not ebb and flow, the rule seems to be universal, that describing land as running to the stream or the bank, and by it or along the stream or the bank, extends to the middle or thread of the stream, the *filum aquæ*, unless there is something in the description clearly excluding the intermediate space between the edge or bank of the stream and its thread.⁵ And this doctrine was applied to land border-

¹ *Adams v. Cuddy*, 13 Pick. 460; *Chaffin v. Chaffin*, 4 Gray, 280; *Jamaica Pond v. Chandler*, 9 Allen, 167.

² *Carbrey v. Willis*, 7 Allen, 370; *Millett v. Fowle*, 8 Cush. 150.

³ *Waterman v. Johnson*, 13 Pick. 261, 267; *Makepeace v. Bancroft*, 12 Mass. 469, 473; *Blaney v. Rice*, 20 Pick. 62; *Lerned v. Morrill*, 2 N. H. 197; *Kennebec Purchase v. Tiffany*, 1 Me. 219.

⁴ *Kellogg v. Smith*, 7 Cush. 382; *Frost v. Spalding*, 19 Pick. 445.

⁵ *The State v. Gilmanton*, 9 N. H. 461; *Hatch v. Dwight*, 17 Mass. 289, 298, 299; *Commissioners v. Kempshall*, 26 Wend. 404; *The People v. Platt*, 17 Johns. 195, 210; *Hargr. Law Tracts*, 5, 6; *Morgan v. Reading*, 3 S. & M. 366, 399, 404; *The People v. Canal Appraisers*, 13 Wend. 355, 370; *Morrison v. Keen*, 3 Me. 474; *Harramond v. M'Glaughon*, 1 Tayl. 136, though the courses and distances given do not agree with the actual course of the stream. *Browne v. Kennedy*, 5 Harr. & J. 195, 205, 207. See *Hammond v. Ridgely*, 5 Harr. & J. 245, 274, 275;

ing upon a lake and its outlet, which lake was five miles in length but less than a mile in width; the *filum aquæ* was held to be the boundary line.¹ When a boundary line of land runs up or down a stream, it follows its meanderings, and when the length of it is given, it is ascertained by reducing these meandering lines to a straight one.^{2*} The operation of the

* NOTE. — The rulings of the court, in applying the general doctrine of the text, can best be illustrated by referring to the language in the deeds, which were the subjects of consideration. These may appear to be conflicting, but the question seems to turn upon the whole language as to the stream, which is the boundary, and not upon the fact that an object, mentioned as a corner bound, stands upon the bank. If the bank or shore be the intended line, the stream is excluded. If it be the stream, the *filum aquæ*, that is the line, any object mentioned upon the shore merely indicates the point at which the line strikes the bank in extending it to the thread of the stream. Thus, in one case, the line ran "to a stake standing on the east bank, &c., thence down the river, &c.," and was held to extend to the thread. *Luce v. Carley*, 24 Wend. 451. The case of *Lunt v. Holland* is, in most respects, like the last-mentioned case; the corners given were trees standing on the side of the river, the intermediate line "bounding by said river." 14 Mass. 150. In *Newton v. Eddy*, 23 Verm. 319, the boundary was described as "easterly on a creek, and down said creek to a small butternut-tree, which is the north-east corner of said lot." It was held, that the true corner was at the centre of the stream, opposite this tree. The case of *Cold Spring Iron Works v. Tolland*, 9 Cush. 492, is the same in principle as the above, the corner being a tree on the river, but the land "bounding on said" river. The centre of the river was held to be the boundary line. The following cases may be added upon the general point stated in the text: *Newhall v. Ireson*, 13 Gray, 262; *Commonwealth v. Alger*, 7 Cush. 97; *Brown v. Chadbourne*, 31 Me. 9. Among the cases illustrating the other part of the above proposition, is *Dunlap v. Stetson*, 4 Mason, 349, where one corner was a stake, &c. on the west bank of the river, and then around to another stake on the same bank, "thence running on the western bank of said river to high-water to the first bound." It excluded the river. So a line running to G. river, thence "along the shore of said river to," &c., was held to exclude the river. *Child v. Starr*, 4 Hill, 369. *Bradford v. Cressey*, 45 Me. 9, is the same in principle as the last-mentioned case; the line ran to strike the creek, then "on the west bank of said creek." The court, in the latter case, consider, at considerable length, the conflicting cases on this point, many of which are collected in the opinion there given, and sustain the distinction above stated, that where the party

Arnold v. Elmore, 16 Wis. 514; *Yates v. Judd*, 18 Wis. 128; *Gove v. White*, 20 Wis. 432; *Hayes v. Bowman* 1 Rand. 417.

¹ *Ledyard v. Ten Eyck*, 36 Barb. 125.

² *Hicks v. Coleman*, 25 Cal. 142; *Calk v. Stribling*, 1 Bibb, 122

same rule includes the parts of *islands divided by the [*633] thread of the stream, extended as a line across them.¹

But though it is well settled, that if an island forms in a river opposite to lands whose owner's property extends to the thread of the stream, it will belong to both, or to the one or the other, as its parts are divided by the thread of the stream extended across it, or otherwise. Its existence leads, of course, to two separate and distinct threads, one to each branch of the stream, and these are, after such change, to be regarded each as a *filum aquæ*, as to that part of the stream in relation to any new acquisition of titles bordering upon the same.² And the doctrine that the riparian owner of land is thereby the owner of the soil of the stream to its centre, applies to the great rivers in this country, like the Mississippi, subject to the public easement of passing over the same in boats or river craft, and doing whatever is necessary to use it as a highway.³

uses the term "bank, side, margin, or shore," they become themselves monuments, and are to be so treated. The case of *Child v. Starr*, as reported in 4 Hill, 369, overruled the decision in the same case, in 20 Wend. 149. The doctrine as to the "bank," when a monument, excluding the stream itself, was fully held in *Daniels v. Cheshire R. R. Co.* 20 N. H. 85, and in *Halsey v. McCormick*, 3 Kernan, 296, where it was held, that such a boundary carried the line to the low-water mark of the stream, if not otherwise limited. See also *Child v. Starr*, *sup.* For further authorities upon the general subject, see *Ang. Wat. Cour.* § 24, 29; *Varick v. Smith*, 9 Paige, 547; *Hathorn v. Stinson*, 10 Me. 224. But the case of *McCulloch v. Aten*, 2 Ohio, 425, seems to vary somewhat from either of the general propositions above made. There the boundary began "at a white-oak on the southeast bank of G. creek, thence down said creek with the several meanderings thereof," and was held to be the line of the water in the creek, and not the top of the bank. See *Cox v. Freedley*, 33 Penn. St. 129; *ex parte Jennings*, 6 Cowen, 536. But in Tennessee, where her large rivers are deemed to be *navigable* streams by her courts, a line running to a tree on the bank of the C. river, thence down said river according to its several courses, so many rods, to "a sweet gum-tree," was held to run along the line of low-water mark of the river. *Martin v. Nance*, 3 Head, 650.

¹ *Ingraham v. Wilkinson*, 4 Pick. 268; *The People v. Canal Appraisers*, 13 Wend. 355, 370; *Canal Commrs. v. The People*, 5 Wend. 423, 443; *Ang. Wat. Cour.* §§ 44 - 47; 3 Kent, Com. 428; *Schurmeier v. St. P. & P. Railroad*, 10 Minn. 102, 103.

² *Hopkins Academy v. Dickinson*, 9 Cush. 544, 548. See also *ante*, p. *452.

³ *Ingraham v. Wilkinson*, 4 Pick. 268, 271; *Adams v. Pease*, 2 Conn. 481; *The*

46 *a.* Though it would be impossible to reconcile the rulings of the various courts in this country upon the question, what is a navigable stream? it may be useful to give the result of some of these, in order to see in what respect they differ. It seems to be conceded by all, that streams in which the tide ebbs and flows are what are known to the common law as *navigable*. And further, as will be stated hereafter, land bounding upon such streams extends only to the line of the high-water mark. But some of the courts regard the large rivers in this country above tide-water as navigable, and carry the line of land bounding upon them to *low-water* mark. The subject is very ably and learnedly discussed by the court of Mississippi, who make what seems to be the true and proper distinction between *public* streams and *navigable* streams. They show that it does not depend upon the capacity for navigation by boats or other craft, but is borrowed from the law of nations. By this, tidal waters are public highways for all nations, and, therefore, the State only can own or exercise control over them, whereas intra-territorial streams are subject to State jurisdiction as to being navigated, and it is competent for the State to grant the soil under these rivers, subject to a public use of the waters for purposes of travelling and carrying on trade. In that way, the ownership of the soil may be in the riparian proprietors, subject to the easement on the part of the public of passing in boats, rafts, &c. upon its waters. The court examine critically the decisions of the various courts, and come to the conclusion, that whoever owns lands bounding upon such streams,

People v. Platt, 17 Johns. 195, 211; *Hooker v. Cummings*, 20 Johns. 90, 99; *Middleton v. Pritchard*, 3 Scamm. 510, 521; *Gavit v. Chambers*, 3 Ohio, 495; *Commonwealth v. Chapin*, 5 Pick. 199; *Morgan v. Reading*, 3 S. & M. 366, 403; *The People v. Canal Appraisers*, 13 Wend. 355, 371. In *Palmer v. Mulligan*, 3 Caines, 315, *Thompson, J.*, held the Hudson a public river, subject to private ownership of its banks to its thread. In *Brown v. Chadbourne*, 31 Me. 9, the same doctrine is applied to smaller boatable rivers in Maine. See also *Commissioners, &c. v. Withers*, 29 Miss. 29; *Home v. Richards*, 4 Call, 441. In Massachusetts, the doctrine is applied to the Connecticut and Merrimac above tide-water; *Commonwealth v. Alger*, 7 Cush. 53, 97, 101. *Contra*, *Carson v. Blazer*, 2 Binn. 475; *Shrunk v. Schuylkill Co.* 14 S. & R. 71; *Bullock v. Wilson*, 2 Port. 436; *Haight v. Kookak*, 4 Clarke (Iowa), 199, 212; *McManus v. Carmichael*, 3 Iowa, 1. See also *O'Fallon v. Daggett*, 4 Mo. 343; *Canal Commissioners v. The People*, 5 Wend. 423, 443; *Cates v. Wadlington*, 1 M'Cord, 580; *Blanchard v. Porter*, 11 Ohio, 138. See 3 Kent, Com. 431, note; *Claremont v. Carlton*, 2 N. H. 369.

owns the soil to the *filum aquæ*, subject to the right of navigating its waters by the public.¹

The court in New Brunswick recognise the above distinction between navigable and public streams, and the ownership of the soil under them by the riparian proprietors.² In Wisconsin, the court hold Rock River a navigable stream, and excepted, as such, from the mill laws. But they evidently do not give it the incidents of a navigable as distinguished from a public stream, inasmuch as they hold that the ownership of the soil under one of her rivers is not affected by its being declared navigable.³

In this distinction, as to the rights of riparian owners, between a *public* and a *navigable* stream, the courts of Alabama, Ohio, and Maine, coincide, while those of Maine hold that one is liable to indictment who stops the navigation of one of these public streams.⁴ Whereas, Davies, J., in a very elaborate opinion, maintained that the Mohawk is a *navigable* stream, like all the large rivers in New York, that the State owns the beds of these, and that land bounding upon them only extends to the line of low water, and that islands formed in the stream belong to the State.⁵ And the courts of Pennsylvania adopt the same rule in respect to the Monongahela river and other large rivers in the State, the bed of the river to the low-water mark belonging to the State. They trace this doctrine to the Roman law which gives the bed of all perennial streams to the public, ignoring the English common law on the subject.⁶ The law of Pennsylvania, in making the low-water mark of such streams the boundary of the

¹ *Steamboat Magnolia v. Marshall*, 39 Miss. 109-135. See *Canal Appraisers v. The People*, 17 Wend. 595. See *Rhodes v. Otis*, 33 Ala. 578, 596, 597.

² *Eason v. M'Masters*, 1 Kerr, 501.

³ *Wood v. Hustis*, 17 Wis. 418; *Cobb v. Smith*, 16 Wis. 664. See *Wis. Rev. Stat. Ch. 41, § 3*, that boundaries of lands adjoining rivers conform to the common law.

⁴ *Walker v. Public Works*, 16 Ohio, 540, 544; *Veazie v. Dwinel*, 50 Me. 479, 485. See also *Ellis v. Carey*, 30 Ala. 727, 728; *Rhodes v. Otis*, 33 Ala. 593.

⁵ *People v. Canal Commissioners*, 33 N. Y. 461.

⁶ *Monongahela Bridge v. Kirk*, 46 Penn. St. 120; *Flanagan v. Philadelphia*, 42 Penn. St. 229, 230; *Inst. L. 2, T. 1, § 2*. But the chancellor, in *Canal Appraisers v. The People*, 17 Wend. 595, reiterates his position that the common and not the civil law governs in such cases.

riparian owners, is adopted in North Carolina and Tennessee.¹

47. Where the boundary given is a natural pond or lake of fresh water, the boundary line will, it seems, run along the low-water mark of the pond,² though other cases speak only of the "water's edge."³ But if the pond be an artificial one, made by a dam across a running stream, and land is bounded upon it, the line will be the thread of the stream.⁴ [*634] But, if the *natural pond be raised above its natural margin by an artificial dam, at the time of making the deed, or be at that time drawn down by an artificial trench or channel, the line of the water in the then existing pond is the boundary. And unless there is something in the deed to negative the presumption, such boundary is the low-water mark, or line of the pond in its artificial extent, and is not confined to what happened to be the line of the water at the precise time when the deed was made.⁵ In *Hathorn v. Stinson*, the court held that a grant exhibited upon a plan as being bounded by a natural pond which was then raised by a dam, should be construed to include two acres subsequently left bare and susceptible of cultivation, by removing the obstructions in the stream, so as still to bring the boundary to the pond as it was after such removal.⁶ In a peculiar case, however, in Massachusetts, where a large natural pond had been raised by an artificial dam above its natural height, a party to a deed, referring to it as a boundary, was allowed to show by parol that the former bank was the line intended.⁷

48. If the boundary be a navigable stream, that is, one in which the tide ebbs and flows, the land extends only to the

¹ *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. 30, 38; *Elder v. Burrus*, 6 Humph. 367; *Martin v. Nance*, 3 Head, 650.

² *Waterman v. Johnson*, 13 Pick. 261, 265. See *Nelson v. Butterfield*, 21 Me. 229; *West Roxbury v. Stoddard*, 7 Allen, 167; *Canal Commrs. v. The People*, 5 Wend. 446, 447; *Fletcher v. Phelps*, 28 Verm. 257; *Jakeway v. Barrett*, 38 Verm. 323, in relation to Lake Champlain; *Primm v. Walker*, 38 Mo. 99.

³ *The State v. Gilmanton*, 9 N. H. 461; *Hathorn v. Stinson*, 10 Me. 224, 238.

⁴ *Bradley v. Rice*, 13 Me. 198, 201; *Waterman v. Johnson*, 13 Pick. 261; *Lowell v. Robinson*, 16 Me. 357; *Phinney v. Watts*, 9 Gray, 269.

⁵ *Wood v. Kelley*, 30 Me. 47, 54.

⁶ *Hathorn v. Stinson*, 12 Me. 183.

⁷ *Bradley v. Rice*, 13 Me. 200, 201; *Waterman v. Johnson*, 13 Pick. 261.

water's edge, or to high-water mark.¹ And the owner of land bounding on such a stream would have no cause of action against one who, in navigating it, should lay his boat, or vessel, or raft, upon the shore fronting his land, if he has not made improvements upon the same, since the title to the shore is in the State.² So a conveyance bounding "westerly by the beach," excludes the shore, or land between high and low water mark.³

49. The same is the rule where land is bounded by the sea, or an arm of the sea. The space between high and low water mark of the border of the sea is called the "shore," and belongs, by common law, to the sovereign, precluding, of course, the claim of any other person unless acquired by grant from the sovereign.⁴ The State, in such cases, holds the fee in trust for the public, except in New York, where, by an early declaration to that effect, she holds it in trust for the owner of the adjacent lands.⁵ The civil and common law substantially concur in this respect, with the exception that, by the former, the "shore" extended to the highest winter tide, whereas by the latter, it is limited to the ordinary high-water line of the flow of the tide, which has been construed to be, on the land side, the medium line of the high water of all tides occurring in the ordinary course of nature throughout the year.⁶ In the case of the lands originally held by the Colonial government of Massachusetts, the government stood in two relations to its subjects, one as owner of the land to be granted to purchasers and settlers, to be held in severalty in fee, the other a prerogative

¹ *Canal Commissioners v. The People*, 5 Wend. 423, 442; *Middleton v. Pritchard*, 3 Scamm. 520; *East Haven v. Hemingway*, 7 Conn. 186.

² *Stewart v. Fitch*, 30 N. J. Law, 20.

³ *Niles v. Patch*, 13 Gray, 254.

⁴ *Hargr. Law Tracts*, 12; *Storer v. Freeman*, 6 Mass. 435, 438, 439; 3 Kent, Com. 431; *Cortelyou v. Van Brundt*, 2 Johns. 362. "Beach," "strand," and "flats," are often used as identical with "shore." *Doane v. Willcutt*, 5 Gray, 328, 335; *Niles v. Patch*, 13 Gray, 254; *Hodge v. Boothby*, 48 Me. 71; *Dana v. Jackson St. Wharf*, 31 Cal. 120; *Pollard v. Hagan*, 3 How. 230; *Goodtitle v. Kibbe*, 9 How. 477.

⁵ *Ledyard v. Ten Eyck*, 36 Barb. 125.

⁶ *City of Galveston v. Menard*, 23 Texas, 349, 392, 398; *Commonwealth v. Roxbury*, 9 Gray, 451, 483, 491, and note, p. 520; *Attorney-General v. Chambers*, 4 De G., M. & C. 206, 214, 216; s. c. 4 De G. & J. 56, 58; *Martin v. O'Brien*, 34 Miss. 21, 36; *Commonwealth v. Alger*, 7 Cush. 63, 65; *Inst. Lib.* 2, T. 1, § 3; *Teechemacher v. Thompson*, 18 Cal. 21.

right to the sea and seashores, in a fiduciary relation for the public use.¹

50. By an ordinance in 1641, the common law of Massachusetts was changed, so as to give to the owner of lands bounding on the sea, &c. the shore or *flats* adjoining it between high and low water, provided the tide does not ebb more than one hundred rods, and to that extent, if the tide ebbs to a greater distance, and such is now the common law of the State. An owner, however, may sell his upland and flats together or separately, the one to one man, and the other to another.² If he conveys bounding on the sea, it will include the flats to low-water mark, if not exceeding the one hundred rods. If he bounds the land granted by the *shore*, or running to the shore, and the like, the limits of his grant are the high-water line along the margin of the land, unless the word shore is [*635] coupled *with the sea, so as to show that the line is intended to be that side of the shore or beach next to the sea.³ This extends to flats adjacent to islands as well as the main land.⁴ And a disseisin of the main land may extend to the flats.⁵ And as an incident to this ownership of the flats, seaweed thrown upon them or upon the shore, belongs as an appurtenant to the owner of the soil.⁶ And the right to take it may be the subject of sale and conveyance, separate from the soil itself.⁷

51. Notwithstanding it was once supposed to be otherwise, in Massachusetts, at least,⁸ it seems to be now a well-settled rule of law, that, where land sold is bounded by a *highway*, or upon or along a highway, the thread or centre line of the same is presumed to be the limit and boundary of such land, in strict

¹ Commonwealth v. Roxbury, 9 Gray, 492.

² Hill v. Lord, 48 Me. 95; Valentine v. Piper, 22 Pick. 94.

³ Storer v. Freeman, 6 Mass. 435, 439; 3 Kent, Com. 434; Doane v. Willcutt, 5 Gray, 335; Green v. Chelsea, 24 Pick. 71, 77. The grant of a wharf may carry the flats in front of it. Ashby v. Eastern R. R. 5 Met. 368; Doane v. Broad St. Association, 6 Mass. 332; Commonwealth v. Alger, 7 Cush. 66. See note, 9 Gray, 534, 525, and cases cited; Palmer v. Hicks, 6 Johns. 133; Middletown v. Sage, 8 Conn. 221; Hodge v. Boothby, 48 Me. 71. Whether this ordinance extended to New Hampshire, *quære*. Nudd v. Hobbs, 17 N. H. 527.

⁴ Hill v. Lord, 48 Me. 95.

⁵ Valentine v. Piper, 22 Pick. 94.

⁷ Hill v. Lord, *sup.*

⁶ Emory v. Turnbull, 2 Johns. 322.

⁸ Tyler v. Hammond, 11 Pick. 193.

analogy with the case of a stream of water not navigable.^{1*} And where a *road, street, &c.* are referred to as boundaries, it is understood to be the road as it is actually opened and in use, rather than as it was originally located, if there has been

* NOTE.—But while the doctrine, as stated in the text, is now the settled rule of law, the cases present so many limitations and qualifications of the rule, in order to carry out the intention of the parties to the grant, that it becomes necessary to refer to some of these otherwise than by their names. The reader will find the subject discussed, and numerous cases collected, in 2 Smith's Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 216. In *Berridge v. Ward*, 10 C. B. N. s. 400, the grant was bounded by a highway, and held to extend to the *filum viae*, although the colored plan of the lot sold, and admeasurement, extended only to the line of the road. The case of *Salisbury v. G. N. Railway Co.*, 5 C. B. N. s. 174, was one where the highway adjoining the granted premises was held to be excluded by the description taken in connection with the circumstances existing at the time. In *Smith v. Slocomb*, 9 Gray, 36, the description of the premises began at an angle in the wall on the side of the road, and ran around the parcel "to a stake and stones at the afore-said road, and thence on the line of said road to the first-mentioned bound," and was held to exclude the road. See also *Sibley v. Holden*, 10 Pick. 249; *Phillips v. Bowers*, 7 Gray, 25. While, in New Jersey, the doctrine of land bounding on a highway extending to the thread of the street, prevails. *Winter v. Peterson*, 4 Zab. 527. If the terms of the deed show an intention to make the side-line, rather than the centre of the road, the boundary, it will be so construed. As where the line began at a corner on the side of the road, and ran by courses and distances, but without reference to the road, which, if accurately followed, would exclude it, it was held not to extend beyond the line thus indicated. *Hoboken Land Co. v. Kerrigan*, 30 N. J. (Law), 16. So in a more recent case in Massachusetts, where land was bounded by a thirty-feet street, by a line running so many feet from a certain bound, which admeasurement brought the line to the edge of the street, it was held to exclude the street. And inasmuch as the street was a private one, in which the grantor had no interest, it was further held not to pass any right of way in the street, nor to amount to a covenant of any such right belonging to the granted premises. *Brainard v. Boston & N. Y. Central Railroad*, 12 Gray, 410. Sometimes granting land bounding upon a way or street, is held to grant an easement in the way mentioned, though it may not convey

¹ *Newhall v. Ireson*, 8 Cush. 595, 598; *Hammond v. McLachlan*, 1 Sandf. 323; *Herring v. Fisher*, Id. 344; *Child v. Starr*, 4 Hill, 369, 373, unless the description, which may be the case, excludes the soil of the highway. *Jackson v. Hathaway*, 15 Johns. 454; 3 Kent, Com. 433, 434; *Chatham v. Brainerd*, 11 Conn. 60; *Codman v. Evans*, 1 Allen, 443; *Hollenbeck v. Rowley*, 8 Allen, 473; *Milhan v. Sharp*, 27 N. Y. 624; *Dubuque v. Maloney*, 9 Iowa, 458; *Rice v. Worcester*, 11 Gray, 283, n.; *Bissell v. N. Y. Cent. Railroad*, 26 Barb. 633; *Gove v. White*, 20 Wis. 432.

any change in this respect.¹ So if a fence has stood over twenty years along a street, and its bounds cannot be defined by record, the fence is taken as its true line.² And the same rule applies to a private street, as well in the city as in the country, opened by the grantor, upon which he sells house-

any part of the soil. But that seems to be limited to cases where the grantor owns the way or street, if a private one not opened or dedicated. If he do not, neither grant nor covenant as to such easement will be implied from merely bounding upon it, unless the street be a public one, or it be laid down upon a plan referred to by the deed as an existing street. If it operates at all, it is usually by estoppel. *Howe v. Alger*, 4 Allen, 200; *Roberts v. Karr*, 1 Taunt, 495; *White v. Flannigain*, 1 Md. 540, 542; *Moale v. Mayor, &c.* 5 Md. 314; *Hanson v. Campbell*, 20 Md. 232; *Washb. Ease.* *172, *173; post, *671. In *Morrow v. Willard*, 30 Verm. 118, where the court held, that bounding "south on a highway" passes the soil to its centre-line; if it had said "by the north line of the highway," it would have excluded it altogether. And in *Kimball v. City of Kenosha*, 4 Wis. 331, the court say, "unless the street or road is expressly excluded, the grantee takes to the centre." But in *Cox v. Freedley*, 33 Penn. St. 124, a grant bounding "along the southeast side of Race Street, &c." was held to carry the land to the centre of the street, although the admeasurements, as given, carried the line only to the side of the street. The court rely much upon the identity of the rule as to roads and streams of water, when referred to as boundaries, and if land is bounded "by the river," or "along the river," it includes the stream to its thread. The case of *Paul v. Carver*, 24 Penn. St. 207, and 26 Penn. St. 224, is to the same effect as the case above stated. See also *Phillips v. Bowers*, 7 Gray, 24, 25. From the want of any precise technical rule upon the subject, such case must be tested, in no small degree, by its own circumstances, where there has been a departure from a general reference to such way, and the following cases are added, as confirming the general doctrine stated in the text. *Witter v. Harvey*, 1 McCord, 67; *Canal Trustees v. Havens*, 11 Ill. 557; *Parker v. Framingham*, 8 Met. 267; *O'Linda v. Lothrop*, 21 Pick. 296; *Harris v. Elliott*, 10 Pet. 53; *Fisher v. Smith*, 9 Gray, 441; *Grose v. West*, 7 Taunt. 39; *Headlam v. Hedley*, Holt, 463; *Steel v. Prickett*, 2 Stark. 463; *Smith v. Slocomb*, 11 Gray, 285.

But where the grantor laid out a plan of several lots, having thereon an open space marked as "a park," and bounded the lots, in his conveyance of them, by the *Park*, it was held, that the grantees were limited in their grants by the exterior line of the park, and could not claim to the centre of the space. *Perrin v. N. Y. Central Railroad*, 40 Barb. 65; *Hanson v. Campbell*, 20 Md. 223.

¹ *Tibbetts v. Estes*, 52 Ma. 566, 568; *Falls Village, &c. Co. v. Tibbetts*, 31 Conn. 165.

² *Hollenbeck v. Rowley*, 8 Allen, 475.

lots, bounding them upon it.¹ It extends to lands bounding upon dedicated streets as well as such as are regularly laid out and accepted, if they are open and in use.² It extends also to streets in the city of New York.³ And in all cases of boundary, where the object referred to in the description is of considerable width, like an artificial ditch, a stone-wall, and the like, the grant extends to the centre of it.⁴

52. While it has become an elementary principle, in construing a deed, that known and visible monuments, rather than admeasurements, shall govern, parol evidence is often admissible and necessary to identify and ascertain the locality of such monuments, and which of two or more objects answering the description of the monument named was intended, as where the monument is a pine-tree, and there are two, to either of which the description in the deed might refer.⁵ And where the description in the deed leaves the boundaries intended doubtful, it is competent to show the practical construction given by the parties to the language used.⁶ In all these cases, the question, what the boundaries of a given piece of land which has been conveyed by deed are, is for the court; where these boundaries are, is a question for the jury.⁷ What is the true location of a survey, is not one of construction, nor a question of law, but of fact.⁸ And whether a particular piece of land is included within the boundaries mentioned, if these are in dispute, is a question for the jury.⁹

¹ *Hammond v. McLachlan*, 1 Sandf. 323; *Holmes v. Bellingham*, 7 Com. B. x. s. 329; *Fisher v. Smith*, 9 Gray, 441; *Phillips v. Bowers*, 7 Gray, 26; 17th Street, 1 Wend. 262; *Lozier v. N. Y. Cent. Railroad*, 42 Barb. 468; *Bissell v. N. Y. Cent. Railroad*, 23 N. Y. 61; *Adams v. Saratoga & W. Railroad*, 11 Barb. 434.

² *Weisbrod v. C. & N. W. Railroad*, 18 Wis. 43; *Banks v. Ogden*, 2 Wall. U. S. 57, 69.

³ *People v. Law*, 22 How. Prac. C. 115; *Wetmore v. Law*, *Id.* 130.

⁴ *Child v. Starr*, 4 Hill, 369, 373; *Warner v. Southworth*, 6 Conn. 471, 474; *Bradford v. Cressey*, 45 Me. 9.

⁵ *Waterman v. Johnson*, 13 Pick. 267; *Frost v. Spaulding*, 19 Pick. 445, 447; *Ferris v. Coover*, 10 Cal. 624; *Middleton v. Perry*, 2 Bay, 539; *Claremont v. Carlton*, 2 N. H. 369, 373; *Cotton v. Seavey*, 22 Cal. 496.

⁶ *Stone v. Clark*, 1 Met. 378; *Choate v. Burnham*, 6 Pick. 274, 278; 3 Dane, Abr. 363; *Steele v. Taylor*, 1 A. K. Marsh. 315; *Gratz v. Beates*, 45 Penn. St. 504.

⁷ *Abbott v. Abbott*, 51 Me. 581.

⁸ *Opdyke v. Stephens*, 4 Dutch. 90.

⁹ *Pettingill v. Porter*, 3 Allen, 349.

[*636] *58. But it is not competent to control the boundaries given in a deed by parol evidence, that the parties supposed other land, in addition to what is embraced within such bounds, was included in the grant, or that the monument expressly described is different from the one intended.¹ And although coming rather within the rules of evidence, than of the construction and interpretation of deeds, it may be remarked, that what is called *reputation*, is never evidence of title, nor is it admissible in support of private rights.² But it is sometimes admitted to establish what are the boundaries of particular parcels intended to be conveyed by deed, though it is believed that the monuments which may be thus identified must be both ancient, and of a public or quasi public nature. Thus traditional evidence is admissible to show boundaries of ancient parishes.³ So in one case it was admitted to establish the line of a public grant of great notoriety made many years before, and which was referred to as a monument in a deed of adjacent land.⁴ So a map was admitted to establish a line which was proved to have been in existence many years, and referred to by the proprietors of the lands designated thereon, as the original map of their location.⁵ But there is a singular looseness as well as discrepancy in the ruling of different courts, upon the competency of reputation and hearsay evidence in establishing particular monuments and boundaries of private lands. Thus in one case, McLean, J., instructed the jury, that "reputation is admissible evidence to prove boundaries," that what an individual had said of certain lines and cor-

¹ *Frost v. Spaulding*, 19 Pick. 445, 448; *Child v. Wells*, 13 Pick. 121, where a deed which described and granted half of A, also B, also half of G, was held to convey the entire parcel B. *Pride v. Lunt*, 19 Me. 115. If a deed declares that a certain stake is a corner, parol evidence is not admissible to show that the stake is not the corner. *McCoy v. Galloway*, 3 Ohio, 283; *Emerick v. Kohler*, 29 Barb. 169; *Parker v. Kane*, 22 How. 1; *Clark v. Baird*, 5 Seld. 183; *Dodge v. Nichols*, 5 Allen, 548; *Spiller v. Scribner*, 36 Verm. 247; *Gilman v. Smith*, 12 Verm. 150; *Peaslee v. Gee*, 19 N. H. 278; *Terry v. Chandler*, 16 N. Y. 358; *Dean v. Erskine*, 18 N. H. 83, parol evidence excluded tending to show the grant of an entire lot, though described as half of it.

² *Green v. Chelsea*, 24 Pick. 71, 80.

³ 1 Greenl. Ev. § 145.

⁴ *Taylor v. Strafford*, 1 Hawks, 116, 132.

⁵ *Harmer v. Morris*, 1 McLean, 44; *Whitney v. Smith*, 10 N. H. 43; *Gratz v. Beates*, 45 Penn. St. 505.

ners did not constitute *reputation*, "the reputation must be general in the neighborhood."¹ A similar doctrine is maintained by the *court of Kentucky.² In North [*637] Carolina, "hearsay is evidence upon the question of boundary." So one may show "common reputation and understanding in the neighborhood."³ And language about as strong is used by McLean, J., in the court of the United States.⁴ In Pennsylvania, the court limited the testimony of what another person had said to the declarations of one then deceased.⁵ In New Hampshire, Richardson, C. J., refers to numerous cases where, "in questions of boundary, declarations as to common opinion of the place, made by deceased persons, who, from their situation, had the means of knowledge and no interest to misrepresent, have been generally considered admissible."⁶ And in Virginia, this doctrine is fully sustained in a very elaborate opinion, by Tucker, Pres. J.⁷ In Ohio, such reputation cannot be admitted to control record evidence, though "where corners are lost, they may be proved by reputation."⁸ The rule on this subject, as adopted in Florida, is thus stated: "Such evidence, taken in connection with other evidence, is entitled to respect in cases of boundary, where the lapse of time is so great as to render it difficult, if not impossible, to prove the boundary by the existence of the primitive landmarks, or other evidence than that of hearsay."⁹ And in New Jersey, in the case of *Opdyke v. Stephens*, cited above, the court say, "ancient reputation" is one of the things held competent to be shown to establish boundaries. The subject is ably examined by Mr. Greenleaf, in his treatise on evidence,

¹ *Nelson v. Hall*, 1 McLean, 518.

² *Smith v. Prewitt*, 2 A. K. Marsh. 158; *Beaty v. Hudson*, 9 Dana, 322; *Smith v. Shackleford*, 9 Dana, 455; *Cherry v. Steele*, 6 Lit. 9.

³ *Den v. Herring*, 3 Dev. 340; *Tate v. Southard*, 3 Hawks, 119. But by a more recent case, report or reputation in the neighborhood is not evidence of a paper title. *Den v. Cassells*, 3 Dev. & B. 49.

⁴ *Boardman v. Reed*, 6 Pet. 341; *Conn v. Penn*, 1 Pet. (C. C.) 511, per Washington. *Opdyke v. Stephens*, 4 Dutch. 89, approving of *Conn v. Penn*.

⁵ *Buchanan v. Moore*, 10 S. & R. 281. See *Abington v. N. Bridgewater*, 23 Pick, 175, per *Putnam, J.*; *Pettibone v. Rose*, *Brayt*. 77.

⁶ *Shepherd v. Thompson*, 4 N. H. 214; *Great Falls v. Worster*, 15 N. H. 412, 437.

⁷ *Harriman v. Brown*, 8 Leigh, 697, 707, *et seq.*

⁸ *McCoy v. Galloway*, 3 Ohio, 282. ⁹ *Daggett v. Willey*, 6 Florida, 511.

where many of these cases are considered, and the conclusion to which he comes is undoubtedly the sound one, that the general rule of law of this country excludes such evidence, when offered for the purpose of proving the boundary of a private estate.¹ But this does not exclude evidence of admissions and declarations as to boundaries of land made by an owner while in occupation thereof.² The question was considered in *Bartlett v. Emerson*, where former cases decided by the court [*638] are commented upon by Thomas, J. In that case, a wood-cutter, then deceased, who had worked upon the lot whose boundary was in question, for more than fifty years, and lived near it, but never owned or occupied either of the lots, had, at the request of the plaintiff, gone upon the plaintiff's lot in presence of witnesses, and pointed out an ancient stake which he declared was the corner-bound. The court held the evidence incompetent. They overrule the case of *Van Deusen v. Turner*, so far as it conflicts with this ruling, and restrict the admissibility of such declarations to those of persons not living at the time of the trial, made while in possession of land owned by them, and when in the act of pointing out their boundaries, with respect to such boundaries, where nothing appears to show an interest to deceive or misrepresent. The fact of the witness going upon the land, and the finding of the stake, do not seem to have been objected to, but merely the declarations made to what it indicated. It has, moreover, been determined in England, that no declarations of a tenant while in possession of the land, in derogation of the title of the reversioner, are admissible in evidence.³ The rule as to declarations, as laid down in more recent cases, seems to be this: a claim made by one in possession of lands, and while upon the land, as to a boundary thereof, which he then pointed out, may be shown after his death as evidence in favor of one claiming under him.⁴ If made anywhere else than on the land, it is not

¹ 1 Greenl. Ev. § 145 and note; *Bartlett v. Emerson*, 7 Gray, 174; *Gratz v. Beates*, 45 Penn. St. 505.

² *Jackson v. M'Call*, 10 Johns. 377; *Daggott v. Shaw*, 5 Met. 223; *Van Deusen v. Turner*, 12 Pick. 532; *Orr v. Hadley*, 36 N. H. 575. See *Ware v. Brookhouse*, 7 Gray, 454.

³ *Papendick v. Bridgwater*, 5 Ellis & B. 166, 177.

⁴ *Wood v. Foster*, 8 Allen, 24.

competent evidence ; so if the person making it is not dead.¹ But in Vermont the declaration of one who had owned the land, but did not then own it, made upon the land, in respect to an ancient monument, was admitted as evidence, after his death.²

54. Where one deed refers to another for a description of the granted premises, it is regarded as of the same effect as if the latter was copied into the deed itself and what is therein described will pass.³ Nor does it make any difference that the deed referred to has not been duly acknowledged or recorded. But if a deed or plan is referred to as one on record, no other than a recorded deed or plan is competent to be used in evidence.⁴ In applying boundaries and monuments referred to in a description of granted premises, "between" two objects excludes these objects and all not lying within them.⁵ So "from" an object or "to" an object, excludes the terminus referred to.⁶ "Beginning at the southwest corner of the granted premises, at A B's northeast corner," means that the corner of these lots should be coincident and identical.⁷

55. Where lines are laid down upon a plan and are referred to accordingly in a deed, they are to be regarded as giving the true description of the parcel, as much as if expressly recited in the deed itself.⁸ *

* NOTE. — Rules of construction, somewhat arbitrary and artificial in their nature, have been applied in determining the rights of riparian owners of lands bordering upon inlets and arms of the sea, and, in some cases, upon

¹ *Morrill v. Titcomb*, 8 Allen, 100 ; *Currier v. Gale*, 14 Gray, 504.

² *Wood v. Willard*, 37 Verm. 377 ; *Smith v. Powers*, 15 N. H. 546, note.

³ *Allen v. Bates*, 6 Pick. 460 ; *Foss v. Crisp*, 20 Pick. 121 ; *Vance v. Fore*, 24 Cal. 444.

⁴ *Simmons v. Johnson*, 14 Wis. 526 ; *Caldwell v. Center*, 30 Cal. 543.

⁵ *Revere v. Leonard*, 1 Mass. 91.

⁶ *Hatch v. Dwight*, 17 Mass. 289, 298 ; 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 265, note. *Bonney v. Morrill*, 52 Me. 256 ; *Millett v. Fowle*, 8 Cush. *150 ; *Carbrey v. Willis*, 7 Allen, 370, whether bounding by "a house" is the body or eaves of the building.

⁷ *Bailey v. White*, 41 N. H. 343.

⁸ *Davis v. Rainsford*, 17 Mass. 207, 211 ; *Kennebec Purchase v. Tiffany*, 1 Me. 219 ; *Thomas v. Patten*, 13 Me. 329 ; *Lunt v. Holland*, 14 Mass. 149 ; *Shirras v. Craig*, 7 Cranch, 48 ; *M'Donald v. Lindall*, 3 Rawle, 496 ; *Ferris v. Coover*, 10 Cal. 622 ; *Morgan v. Moore*, 8 Gray, 819 ; *Farnsworth v. Taylor*, 9 Gray, 162, as to passing streets exhibited upon a plan. See also *Rogers v. Parker*, Id. 445 ; *Murdock v. Chapman*, 9 Gray, 158 ; *Spiller v. Scribner*, 36 Verm. 247 ; *Birmingham v. Anderson*, 48 Penn. St. 253 ; *Parker v. Bennett*, 11 Allen, 393.

[*639] *56. It is often customary to insert in a deed, by way of explanation or for some similar purpose, recitals of certain things which, though not necessarily a part of the deed, are often useful in aiding to understand the intention of the parties to the same. In the celebrated case of *Cholmondeley v. Clinton*, the judgment of the court was materially affected by the clew to the intention of the parties supplied by the recitals in the deed. The language of Wilde, J., upon this subject is: "Every deed is to be construed according to the intention of the parties, as manifested by the entire instrument, although it may not comport with the language of a particular part of it. Thus a recital or a preamble in a deed, may qualify the generality of the words of a covenant, or other parts of a deed.¹ And he illustrates his proposition by a case, where the lands intended to be conveyed were particularly named in the preamble, and were afterwards minutely described in the premises; to which was added a sweeping clause, purporting to convey "all other the donor's lands, tenements, and hereditaments in Ireland." But it was held, that this general clause was limited and restricted by the recitals and preamble, and nothing passed beyond what was there described.² These recitals are usually a part also of the premises of the deed.³ In a recent case it was held, that a recital in a deed might constitute a covenant, and render the party liable accordingly.⁴

rivers where the shore line is curved or crooked, so far as relates to the flats adjacent to this line, or in the case of rivers lying between it and the thread of the stream. As the side-lines of the respective parcels, belonging to different owners of the upland, if extended in a direct course to low-water, or to the centre of the stream, might often cross each other, some special and peculiar mode or principle of determining such admeasurement and boundary became necessary for settling these conflicting rights. The reader will find these explained in *Angell on Watercourses*, §§ 55, 56, and in the following cases. *Emerson v. Taylor*, 9 Me. 42; *Rust v. Boston Mill Corp.* 6 Pick. 158; *Deerfield v. Arms*, 17 Pick. 41, 44, 45; *Commonwealth v. Alger*, 7 Cush. 67; 9 Gray, 521, 522, notes and cases cited. *Atty.-Gen. v. Boston Wharf Co.* 12 Gray, 553.

¹ *Allen v. Holton*, 20 Pick. 463, 464.

² *Moore v. Magrath*, Cowp. 9. See *Peck v. Handey*, 2 Texas, 673, 677.

³ *Cholmondeley v. Clinton*, 2 Jac. & W. 134; *Shep. Touch.*, Prest. ed. 76, and cases cited in the note; 4 Cruise, Dig. 264.

⁴ *Farrall v. Hilditch*, 5 C. B. n. s. 840.

57. If the grantor wish to except anything out of what he may, in general terms, have granted, it is proper that such exception should follow the description of the thing granted, and it comes, therefore, under the head of the premises in the deed. As an exception is the taking of something out of the thing granted which would otherwise pass by the deed, it may be said, in general terms, that it ought to be stated and described as fully and accurately as if the grantee were the grantor of the thing excepted, and the grantor, in the deed, made the grantee by the exception. It must, in the first place, be a part of the thing included in the grant, and be to be taken, in substance, out of that, in which respects it differs from a reservation, which, *as will be explained, is always of some [*640] new right not *in esse*, in substance, at the making of the grant. Exceptions are often made in the form of a reservation, where the thing intended not to pass by the deed, is then existing. Thus, the grant of a farm, "reserving to the public the use of the road through said farm;" "also reserving for W. R. R. the roadway for said road, as laid out," &c.; was held to except the easement of the public and of the railroad out of the granted premises, and that the soil and freehold of these passed by the deed, the effect being to create an *exception* and not a *reservation*.¹ So in *Fancy v. Scott*, where, in the lease, the lessor *reserved* the peat and a right to dig it, and so pleaded it as a reservation, it was held to be an *exception* and not a reservation. "A landlord cannot *reserve* a component part of the lands demised or granted."² Accordingly, when A sold his land *reserving* the coal, it was held to be an *exception*, thereby making the grantor the separate and absolute owner of the coal.³ So where one granted, "except as is hereinafter excepted," it being in the granting part of the deed, was held not to be an exception out of the thing granted, but an excluding of such part from the grant altogether, "*si quis rem dat et partem retinet, illa pars quem retinet semper cum eo est, et semper*

¹ *Richardson v. Palmer*, 38 N. H. 212, 223; *Hard v. Curtis*, 7 Met. 110; *Pettee v. Hawes*, 13 Pick. 323.

² *Fancy v. Scott*, 2 M. & R. 335. See also *Doe v. Lock*, 2 A. & E. 724; *Dyer*, 19 a, pl. 110; *Codet*, 67 a, 143 a; post, *645.

³ *Whitaker v. Brown*, 46 Penn. St. 197.

fruit."¹ The effect, in such a case, in respect to the thing excepted, is as if it never had been included in the deed.² So there may be an exception out of an exception, limiting the general effect of the exception, and withdrawing something from its operation, which will therefore pass by the general grant.³ The writers last cited give ten rules in relation to what may be excepted, and how an exception may be properly made. But it will be sufficient to refer to some general principles which are applicable to cases of this kind. In the first place, the exception must not be repugnant to the grant; if it is, it is void. Consequently, while it is competent to make an exception of a particular thing out of a general grant, it is not so if the grant itself is special and particular. Thus, if the grant were of a lot of land, describing it, and making general mention of its quantity, as twenty acres, for instance, it would be competent to except out of it one acre. But if the grant had been of twenty acres specifically, it would be obviously repugnant to such a grant to except one acre. In the one case the twenty acres are mentioned as a part of the description of the entire lot or parcel. In the other, the grant is of each and every acre of the twenty, and to except one is to take back what had been once specifically granted.⁴ So one may grant a farm, excepting the meadow. But to grant a pasture and meadow, excepting the meadow, would be repugnant and void.⁵ The rule, as given in one of the cases is, that exceptions must be of something that can be severed from what is granted. Reservations are always of something issuing or coming out of the thing or property granted, and not a part of the thing itself. They must be to the grantor and not to a stranger; if to a stranger, they are void.⁶ In one case, an administrator sold the estate of his intestate, after his wife had had her dower set out, and in it described the premises by metes and bounds, excepting the widow's thirds of so many acres, set off on the west

¹ *Greenleaf v. Birth*, 6 Peters, 302, 310; 60 Lit. 47 a.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 207, and Powell's note; Shep. Touch. 77.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 208; Shep. Touch., Prest. ed. 78, and note.

⁴ Shep. Touch. 79; *Sprague v. Snow*, 4 Pick. 54; *Cutler v. Tufts*, 3 Pick. 373; 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 271, note.

⁵ Shep. Touch. 79.

⁶ *Borst v. Empie*, 1 Seld. 38; *Barber v. Barber*, 33 Conn. 335; post, pl. 67

side of the tract. It was held to be an exception of her life estate in that part of the tract, and not so much in fee of the tract itself.¹

58. It may be added, that whatever may pass by words of grant, may be excepted by like words, and the same consequences attach to such an exception as would have attached had it been a grant, such as, for instance, that it carries with it, constructively, to the grantor making the exception, all the necessary means of enjoying or availing himself of it.

Thus *if one grant land, excepting the trees, he has a [*641] right to enter and cut them and carry them away.²

So if he excepts the mines, he retains the powers incident to working them.³ So if the exception from an estate be a mill standing upon it, it includes therewith the land under it, and so much as is necessary to use it, with the necessary privileges of water for working it, unless this water privilege and land be the estate particularly granted, in which case the exception would only cover the building.⁴

59. And the same rule applies to an exception as to a grant, in respect to the limitation of the estate thereby created. If the exception be to himself without words of inheritance, the grantor takes only a life estate, and if he means to retain a fee in what he excepts, he must limit it accordingly.⁵ The term *Premises*, it will be perceived, has thus far been used as embracing all that part of a deed which precedes the *habendum*, and this is the proper technical sense of the term as used in conveyancing. In its etymological sense, the term applies to that which has been before mentioned, and includes facts recited in the instrument in which it is used. But in popular phrase it is used for the lands and tenements themselves which are the subject of grant.⁶

¹ *Crosby v. Montgomery*, 38 Verm. 238.

² *Shep. Touch.* 100; *Broom, Max*, 365; *Dand v. Kingscote*, 6 M. & W. 174; *Pettee v. Hawes*, 13 Pick. 322, 327.

³ *Wms. Real Prop.* 174.

⁴ *Allen v. Scott*, 21 Pick. 25; *Howard v. Wadsworth*, 3 Me. 471. See, as to the exception of a house in granting a farm, *Sanborn v. Hoyt*, 24 Me. 118.

⁵ *Shep. Touch.* 100; *Jamaica Pond v. Chandler*, 9 Allen, 170; *Curtis v. Gardner*, 13 Met. 461.

⁶ *Sumner v. Williams*, 8 Mass. 162, 174; *Wms. Real Prop.* 14; *Doe v. Meakin*, 1 East, 456, 459; *Bouvier, Dict. "Premises."*

60. The next orderly part of a deed is the *habendum*, which begins at the words "to have and to hold," &c. the office and purpose of which is to limit and define the estate which the grantee is to have in the property granted, such as whether for life, in fee, and the like. After what has been said in the early part of this work as to the different kinds of estate, and the proper words by which these various estates may be limited, it will not be necessary to repeat in what form of phrase-ology an *habendum* must be framed, to accomplish the purpose for which it is designed. As has already been observed, it is not an essential part of a deed, and Chancellor Kent declares that it has degenerated into a mere useless form. If the granting part of the deed contain proper words of limitation, the *habendum* may be dispensed with altogether. And of so little importance is it deemed, compared with the words of the grant, that, if the *habendum* is clearly repugnant to the grant, it is treated as of no validity or effect. But where the grant is indefinite from its generality in respect to the estate in the lands conveyed, which it is intended to create in the grantee, the *habendum* serves to define, qualify, or control it.¹ Thus, a lease of land to one, *habendum* to him and his heirs, conveys a fee.²

61. An *habendum* may, therefore, be regarded as the clause following the granting part of the premises in a deed which defines the extent of ownership in the thing granted, to be held and enjoyed by the grantee, and can, therefore, be applied to use only when the granting words leave the subject of such ownership open to explanation. Thus, a grant to A, of certain lands, without any other words of limitation, leaves it doubtful what is to be the extent of ownership, as to time, which he is to have therein, though, to supply the omission, the common law would construe it to mean that he should enjoy it for life. But if a clause follows the grant, declaring that he is to hold the estate for years, or to himself and his heirs, it simply defines what had been before left indeterminate. So if the grant

¹ Co. Lit. 6 a; Termes de la Ley, "Habendum;" Sumner v. Williams, 8 Mass. 162, 174; 1 Wood, Conv. 224, and Powell's note; Shep. Touch. 475; 4 Kent, Com. 468; Berry v. Billings, 44 Me. 423.

² Jamaica Pond v. Chandler, 9 Allen, 168.

be to "A and his heirs," the term "heirs" is indefinite, though, if no explanation is given, the law construes it to mean heirs generally. But a clause following the grant, declaring that he is to hold to him and the "heirs of his body," simply defines what heirs were meant by the general term used in the grant. But because the broadness of the grant, if to one and his heirs, embraces all minor estates, it has been held, as it is said, that, though the limitation in the *habendum* be to a certain class of heirs, namely, to heirs of the body, and would be good, *yet, if this class of heirs were to [*648] fail, the general heirs of the grantee would take, there being at first, by the terms of the grant, a fee-simple which is expectant upon the estate tail which is first to take effect.¹ The rule, as stated by Mr. Powell in the note above cited, is this: "That where a deed first speaks in general words, and afterwards in special words, and the latter accord with the former, this deed shall operate according to the special words, whether they enlarge or restrain the general words that precede."² So the terms of the grant may be qualified and limited by those of the *habendum*, when express reference is made, in the premises, to the *habendum*. Thus, where one granted to A three hundred acres of land "subject to the limitations hereinafter expressed as to part thereof," and in the *habendum* one hundred and fifty acres designated were to the use of the grantee during his life, and at his decease to go to his children, it was held, to give a fee in one half, and a life estate in the other.³ The words of the *habendum* are mere "words of limitation," as they are called, in distinction from the words in the grant, which are those "of purchase."⁴ And in those States where a fee may, by statute, be limited without the word "heirs," a proper reference is to be had to the terms of these statutes, in determining how far the grant and *habendum* are compatible and consistent with each other.

¹ 1 Wood, Conv. 224, Powell's note. See also Shep. Touch. 102. Mr. Preston, in his edition of the latter work, in a note to the same, denies the proposition. But see Thurman v. Cooper, Poph. 138.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 199, 212, 223, 224, note; Perkins, § 167; 4 Cruise, Dig. 274; Wrotesley v. Adams, Plowd. 187, 196.

³ Tyler v. Moore, 42 Penn. St. 374, 388.

⁴ 4 Cruise, Dig. 265; 1 Wood, Conv. 212.

62. If, therefore, anything is embraced in the *habendum* which is not granted, it does not pass. Thus, upon a grant of Blackacre, *habendum* Blackacre and Whiteacre, the first only passes. If, however, the person who is to take is not named in the grant, he may be ascertained if named in the *habendum*, since there is no repugnancy between the two, and the grant alone takes effect.¹ So if a feoffment be to A and B of two acres, *habendum* one acre to A, and the other to B, it is incompatible with the grant, and will not stand against the grant to the two.²

63. If, however, there is a clear repugnance between the nature of the estate granted and that limited in the *habendum*, the latter yields to the former. But if they can be construed so as to stand together by limiting the estate without contradicting the grant, the court always gives that construction in order to give effect to both. If, therefore, a grant be to A and his heirs, *habendum* to him for years or for life, the restrictive clause is void, because it contradicts and defeats the grant.³ Where, by the premises, the estate is granted to one, it cannot by the *habendum* be limited to another, nor can the *habendum* frustrate a grant complete before, or abridge or lessen the estate granted.⁴ A lease to A, *habendum* to him and his heirs for one hundred years, will be a good *habendum* for years, the incompatible clause of "his heirs," as words of inheritance being held void, the estate demised being one for years only.⁵ Instead of referring to the numerous cases where the principles above stated have been applied, it may be sufficient to say, that the test to be applied to an *habendum* in a deed, is whether it can be construed so as to stand with the premises, or is so repugnant in its operation as to be irreconcilable with the latter. In the one case, it limits and explains the grant, in the other, it is rejected as of no effect.⁶

¹ *Spyve v. Topham*, 3 East, 115; 1 Wood, Conv. 206, 212; 4 Cruise, Dig. 272; Shep. Touch. 75; 2 Prest. Conv. 380, 433. *Contra*, *Bustard v. Coulter*, Cro. Elis. 902, 903; *Berry v. Billings*, 44 Me. 424; *Sumner v. Williams*, 8 Mass. 174.

² 1 Wood, Conv. 199, 212; Shep. Touch. 76.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 199, 212, 224; Shep. Touch. 102; 4 Cruise, Dig. 273; *Tyler v. Moore*, 42 Penn. St. 376.

⁴ *Nightingale v. Hidden*, 7 R. I. 118.

⁵ Shep. Touch. 76.

⁶ Shep. Touch. 74; 4 Cruise, Dig. 274; 1 Wood, Conv. 199, 212.

64. The *habendum* frequently serves to limit the uses or to declare to what use the party to whom the deed is made shall have the thing granted, and, generally, to limit the uses to which the estate shall be held.¹ And this, it will be recollected, by recurring to the doctrine of uses, may be important, where no consideration is expressed or proved, in preventing the use from resulting to the grantor.² It may be added, that though usually inserted immediately after the premises, the *habendum* may be embraced in any other part of the deed, and be equally valid.³

65. In the English deeds, there is usually inserted a clause in relation to the transfer of the title deeds of the premises, where the estate granted is a fee. But there is no occasion for such a clause in this country, since the registry furnishes all that is requisite in the history of the title, and the title deeds never pass with the estate from grantor to grantee successively, as in England.⁴

*66. If anything is to be reserved out of the prop- [*645]
erty granted, it is usually done by the clause of *red-*
dendum, as it is called, which commonly follows that of the
habendum. A reservation should be carefully distinguished
from an exception, the difference between the two being this:
By an exception the grantor withdraws from the effect of the
grant some part of the thing itself, which is *in esse*, and in-
cluded under the terms of the grant, as one acre from a cer-
tain field, a shop or a mill standing within the limits of the
granted premises, and the like. Whereas, a reservation,
though made to the grantor, lessor, or the one creating the es-
tate, is something arising out of the thing granted not then *in*
esse, or some new thing created or reserved, issuing or coming
out of the thing granted, and not a part of the thing itself, nor
of anything issuing out of another thing.⁵ The terms "re-
serve," and "reservation," however, are often used as synony-

¹ Shep. Touch. 114; 1 Wood, Conv. 212; *Nightingale v. Hidden*, 7 R. I. 118.

² *Ante*, pp. *116, *132-134.

³ 1 Wood, Conv. 213.

⁴ 4 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 271.

⁵ Co. Lit. 47 b; 4 Kent, Com. 468; Shep. Touch. 80; 1 Wood, Conv. 227; *Doe v. Lock*, 4 Nev. & M. 807; *Dyer v. Sanford*, 9 Met. 395, 404; *Cutler v. Tuffs*, 3 Pick. 272, 278.

mous with "except," and "exception," when the thing to be thereby secured to the grantor is a part of the granted premises, and, when thus used, they are to be construed accordingly.¹ Where one granted a farm, and in his deed reserved the buildings with a right to remove them in so many days, it was held to be a mere license to remove them within that time, but giving him no right in respect to them after that time.² So where one granted his farm, reserving the highways across it, it was construed to be an exception as to easements in the covenants contained in his deed, and not the soil of these.³ So it is said that a reservation may be of money, corn, a horse, or the like, and be good as such. But the reservation of the grass or vesture, or other profits of the land granted, would be void as a technical reservation.⁴ The term in the English books applies chiefly to rents or something in the nature of rent, the words on the part of the grantee or lessee being "yielding or paying therefor," &c.⁵ But in this country, the cases are numerous where the thing reserved is some easement, privilege, or benefit, out of the granted premises, other than and different from the thing granted, and yet nothing like [*646] a rent or return by the grantee, to be by him paid *or delivered to the grantor. In the case of *Sprague v. Snow*, the thing reserved was a right to use the surplus water of a stream, and the court describe it as "an exception or reservation."⁶ Probably, in applying the foregoing rules of construction, it would be held to be an exception, as the thing granted was a water privilege with a shop. But in *Choate v. Burnham*,⁷ the reservation was of a privilege of a way through

¹ *Doe v. Lock*, 4 Nev. & M. 807, where the distinction between exception and reservation is examined at length, and a reservation of "the wood and underground produce" of the estate, was held to be an exception. See *Pettee v. Hawes*, 13 Pick. 323, 326; *Hurd v. Curtis*, 7 Met. 110. See ante, 640.

² *Holton v. Goodrich*, 35 Verm. 21.

³ *Richardson v. Palmer*, 38 N. H. 212; *Leavitt v. Towle*, 8 N. H. 96; *Winthrop v. Fairbanks*, 41 Me. 311.

⁴ 1 Wood, Conv. 228. It is held in Pennsylvania, that growing crops may be reserved by parol upon conveying an estate, although no mention of them is made in the deed. *Backenstoss v. Stahler*, 33 Penn. St. 251; ante, *625; *Adams v. Morse*, 51 Me. 499.

⁵ 1 Wood, Conv. 225.

⁶ *Sprague v. Snow*, 4 Pick. 54; *Karmuller v. Krotz*, 18 Iowa, 357.

⁷ *Choate v. Burnham*, 7 Pick. 274.

the granted premises. In *Dyer v. Sanford*,¹ the reservation was of an easement of light and air to the grantor for the benefit of his house, over a parcel of land adjoining it then granted, in the same way as it had been used before. And in *Cutler v. Tufts*,² the court say, that a reservation "must be of some new right not *in esse* before the grant, as of rent, &c., or of some *pre-existing* easement." In *O'Neal v. Matson*,³ the grant was of a fishery, with a reservation to the grantor to take fish for his own table. And the matter treated as a reservation in *Hornbeck v. Westbrook*, was a limited right to cut and carry away wood from the granted premises.⁴ But a reservation in the sale and conveyance of a saw-mill, of all slabs made at the mill, would be void.⁵

67. Among the rules regulating reservations, one is, that it must be to him who made the deed and not to a stranger. Thus a reservation in a grant to A, of B's right of way, or his right to take seaweed and the like, gives no right to B, unless he had it before. It merely saves the grantor from liability arising from his covenant against incumbrances in case B had such a right.⁶ A second is, that a reservation being equal to a grant, there must be proper words of limitation and inheritance, if the grantor intends to secure it to himself and his heirs, or extend the enjoyment beyond his own life.⁷ A reservation of the trees on the land conveyed, to the grantor and his heirs, is a reservation of the fee in the trees then standing, with a right of soil to have them stand and grow until cut, and a right to enter and cut them. A reservation of the wood and trees forever growing on the land, is of a right in the soil itself, for the growth and nourishment of trees, so long and so far as it may be used for that purpose.⁸ But a reservation of the trees on land granted, to the grantor and his heirs, is limited to the trees then growing, without any limit as to the time of their removal.⁹ A reservation of certain parts

¹ *Dyer v. Sanford*, 9 Met. 395.

² *Cutler v. Tufts*, 3 Pick. 272, 278.

³ *Seymour v. Courtenay*, 5 Burr. 2814.

⁴ *Hornbeck v. Westbrook*, 9 Johns. 73.

⁵ *Adams v. Morse*, 51 Me. 497.

⁶ *Hill v. Lord*, 48 Me. 95.

⁷ *Hornbeck v. Westbrook*, 9 Johns. 73; 1 Wood, Conv. 228, 230; *Seymour v. Courtenay*, 5 Burr. 2814, 2817; *Bean v. Coleman*, 44 N. H. 542.

⁸ *Putnam v. Tuttle*, 10 Gray, 48; *Clap v. Draper*, 4 Mass. 266.

⁹ *Putnam v. Tuttle*, 10 Gray, 49.

of the granted premises, "for the use of our mother," is that of a life estate only.¹

68. Another rule of general application is, that the reservation must be out of the estate granted, and not another, though, in some peculiar cases, such a reservation may operate in the nature of a grant from the grantee, to charge upon other premises the burden of contributing the means of enjoying what is thus reserved. An illustration of both these propositions [*647] may be found in the case of *Dyer v. Sanford*.²

There the grantor, owning a house with a window opening out of the same, and a strip of land adjoining it twenty-five inches wide, conveyed the strip of land to the adjacent owner, reserving the right forever of keeping open the window aforesaid. It was contended, that by so doing he reserved also the light and air that came over the grantee's land to said window from beyond this space of twenty-five inches. But it was held, that he had not this right, for a grantor could not, by a reservation in his own deed, acquire an easement in his grantee's land; unless the carrying out of the grant, according to the stipulations in the deed, of itself provided the means of giving operation and effect to the reservation therein, and created an obligation on the part of the grantee, to suffer him to use it. And the case, put by way of illustration, was as follows: "Suppose A has close No. 2, lying between closes Nos. 1 and 3 of B, and A grants to B the right to lay and maintain a drain from No. 1 across No. 2, thence to be continued through No. 3 to its outlet, and reserves in his deed the right to enter his drain for the benefit of his intermediate close, together with the right and privilege of having the waste water therefrom pass off through the grantee's close, No. 3, forever. In effect this, if accepted, would secure to the grantor a right in the grantee's land, but we think it would enure, by way of implied grant or covenant, and not *strictly* as a reservation."

69. For the reservation of freehold rents, as well as rents under demises, the reader is referred to former parts of this work for a fuller consideration of the subject, under the heads of "Estates for Years" and "Rents."

¹ *Keeler v. Wood*, 30 Verm. 242.

² *Dyer v. Sanford*, 9 Met. 395.

70. Conditions inserted in deeds, restraining or limiting the effect thereof, have been already noticed under the heads of estates upon condition and conditional limitations, and all that is necessary to add upon the subject here is, that such a clause, if it is to be inserted, properly comes next in order after the *habendum* or *reddendum*. And to show how liberal courts are in construing conditions so as to give effect to deeds, the case of *Pierson v. Armstrong* may be mentioned, where the limitation was to A and his heirs, and if A died without *children* living at his death, then over, and he left one child at his death, it was held to save the condition, and this child took a fee absolute.¹

*SECTION V.

[*648]

COVENANTS IN DEEDS.

1. Of the different kinds of covenants in deeds.
2. Covenants usually found in deeds.
3. Covenants *in presenti* and *in futuro*.
- 4, 5. In what cases the covenant of seisin runs with land.
6. *Slater v. Rawson*, what sustains a covenant of seisin.
7. What seisin and possession give effect to covenant of warranty.
8. Cases impugning possession as a sufficient seisin to pass estate.
9. What is embraced and implied in the covenant of seisin.
10. Of covenant of seisin, &c. of an indefeasible estate, &c.
11. Covenant of seisin broken at once, if grantor has no possession.
12. What things constitute a breach of the covenant of seisin.
13. Of covenants against incumbrances.
14. What constitutes an incumbrance.
- 14 a. How far this covenant may be *in futuro*.
15. Of covenant of warranty.
16. Covenant of warranty same as that for quiet enjoyment.
17. Feudal origin and nature of warranty.
18. Covenant of warranty a personal one.
19. Such covenant runs with the estate.
20. Actions for breach of warranty must be by the party evicted.
- 21, 22. Where subsequent warrantor can recover of previous one.
23. Who can release covenant of warranty.
24. Covenant of warranty broken only by eviction.
- 25, 26. Of limited covenants of warranty.

¹ 1 Iowa, 295.

[695]

- 27. Of eviction in case of warranty and covenant for quiet enjoyment.
- 28. What may be treated as an eviction.
- 29. When a party is liable for an eviction by a junior title.
- 30. Of covenant for further assurance.
- 31. Effect of warranty in the way of estoppel.
- 32. When warranty operates a rebutter.
- 33. Of lineal and collateral warranty.
- 34. Of implied covenants of warranty.
- 35. Effect of covenants, express and implied in the same deed.
- 35 a. How far purchaser is liable for a charge on the estate granted.
- 36. Statutes of States as to implied covenants in deeds.
- 36 a. When mention of quantity of land is a covenant.
- 37. Of the rule of damages for breach of covenants.
- 38. Damages for breach of covenant of seisin.
- 39. Damages in case of incumbrances.
- 40. Effect of the payment of damages upon right to recover from others.
- 41. Of damages under a covenant of warranty.
- 42. Rules in different States as to damages.

1. In ordinary deeds, next to the parts which have thus been considered in detail, are inserted the clauses of covenant in respect to the title to the granted premises. For a full examination of the subject the reader is referred to the able and exhaustive work of Mr. Rawle, upon Covenants for Title. This, however, should be borne in mind, that in the conveyance of real estate, if no covenants are expressed in the deed, there is not, as in the sale and transfer of chattels, a warranty of the title. If the deed contains no covenant, the purchaser is wholly without remedy. The right of the grantee to relief, either in law or in equity, on account of defects or incumbrances in the title, in the absence of fraud, depends solely upon the covenants for title which he has received. But if he have been induced by fraud to accept a title, he may have his remedy.¹ But a vendor will be liable for fraudulent representations as to title, if accompanied with damage, although his deed contains covenants of title.²

Covenants in deeds are either *express* or are *implied* from certain words and forms of expression made use of in them, to which the law has attached an obligation, although not, by their

¹ Brandt v. Foster, 5 Iowa, 292.

² Whitney v. Allaire, 1 Comst. 306; Wardell v. Foedick, 13 Johns. 325.

ordinary import, expressing any contract or agreement, which are used in connection with these words of implied covenant. Of this character are the words "give," "grant," "demise," and some other,¹ which will be hereafter considered.

2. The three covenants ordinarily found in deeds of conveyance in the Eastern States, are those contained in the form of a deed heretofore given, namely, of seisin and right to convey, against incumbrances and of warranty. In the English deeds there is a covenant for further assurance, which is also found in deeds in use in some of the Middle States, and a covenant of quiet enjoyment. It is said that the covenant of seisin is not in use now in England, being embraced in that of a right to convey, while in the Western States, Pennsylvania, and the Southern States, the covenant of warranty is not unfrequently the only covenant inserted.² In Iowa, a covenant of warranty is held to embrace the whole three, above mentioned.³ And it is said, that covenants for further assurance are not in general use in this country.⁴ In Ohio, the usual covenants are of seisin and warranty.⁵ Covenants of seisin and right to convey, amount to the same thing.⁶ In construing and applying covenants, they are intended not to enlarge but to defend the quantity of estate granted in the deed, so that if the grant be of less than a fee, a covenant to warrant it to the grantee and his heirs does not enlarge the estate to a fee.⁷ But covenants are sometimes resorted to, to aid in construing doubtful grants.⁸ Sometimes a general covenant of warranty to a grantee and his heirs, may estop the grantor and his heirs, though the granting words do not, in terms, car-

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 365-369; Walk. Am. Law, 381; 1 Wood, Conv. 232; Co. Lit. 384 a, n. 332.

² Wms. Real Prop. 69, and Rawle's note; Caldwell v. Kirkpatrick, 6 Ala. 60.

³ Van Wagner v. Van Nostrand, 19 Iowa, 426.

⁴ Foote v. Burnet, 10 Ohio, 317, 329; Armstrong v. Darby, 26 Mo. 517, case of such a covenant. See Funk v. Creswell, 5 Iowa, 62; Colby v. Osgood, 29 Barb. 339, held to be a covenant that run with the land.

⁵ Walk. Am. Law, 382.

⁶ Griffin v. Fairbrother, 10 Me. 91, 95; Prescott v. Trueman, 4 Mass. 627, 631; Raymond v. Raymond, 10 Cush. 134, 140; Brandt v. Foster, 5 Iowa, 294; contra, Richardson v. Dorr, 5 Verm. 21.

⁷ Ross v. Adams, 4 Dutch. 168; Adams v. Ross, 1 Vroom, 509, 510.

⁸ Mills v. Catlin, 22 Verm. 104.

ry an inheritance, without actually enlarging the estate granted. But such covenant does not estop, when the deed shows what estate was intended to be granted, if that is less than a fee.¹

[*649] *3. A marked difference between covenants of seisin and right to convey, and against incumbrances, and of those of warranty, quiet enjoyment, and further assurance, is, that the former are all in the present tense, relating to something being or existing at the time when the covenant is made while the others relate to something future, and are to guard against the consequences of some future act, or for the performance of some future act which the condition of the title to the estate may require. Two important consequences grow out of this form of the first-named covenants, namely, that if they are ever broken, the breach is simultaneous with the making of the covenant. If the grantor was then seised, he had made good his covenant, and he had a right to convey. If he was not seised, he had violated his covenant as soon as made, and had no right, at common law to convey the estate, and nothing passed by the deed. So with incumbrances. These did or did not exist when the deed was made, and if they did, the covenant that they did not, was then broken. A further consequence was, that a cause of action was at once created in favor of the covenantee to recover his damages, and this being what, in law, is called a *chose in action*, the law, as a general proposition, does not allow of its being transferred to another, to be taken advantage of by him, in his own name. So that a covenant of seisin is not one which can be transferred from one grantee to another grantee of the land, in relation to which it is made. In other words, it is not a covenant that runs with the estate. This may be stated as the American doctrine, though differing, in some respects, from that of the modern English decisions, and, to a certain extent, those of several of the States.²

¹ Shaw v. Galbraith, 7 Penn. St. 111; Ferrett v. Taylor, 9 Cranch. 53; Adams v. Ross, 1 Vroom, 509; Blanchard v. Brooks, 12 Pick. 67; Co. Lit. 385 b.

² M'Carty v. Leggett, 3 Hill, 135; Thayer v. Clemence, 22 Pick. 490, 493; Slater v. Rawson, 1 Met. 450; Fitzhugh v. Croghan, 2 J. J. Marsh. 429, 438; Mitchell v. Warner, 5 Conn. 497; Clark v. Swift, 3 Met. 390, 392; Bartholomew v. Candee, 14 Pick. 167; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 342, n. for American cases; 4 Kent,

4. In the leading English case of *Kingdon v. Nottle*, the covenant of seisin is regarded as one that will run with the land, and may be sued upon by an assignee.¹ [*650] And the courts of Indiana have adopted the same doctrine.² But the former case has been subjected to able criticism by two, at least, of the American courts,³ and the doctrine seems to confound all distinction between covenants of seisin and warranty.

5. In respect to the extent and construction given to covenants of seisin in American deeds, there is an irreconcilable discrepancy in the decisions of the courts. This remark, as will hereafter appear, does not apply to cases where the grantor, when making his deed, is actually out of possession of the granted premises, but to those where he has a possession under a claim of title, adverse to him who has the rightful seisin. In some of the States the covenant of seisin is regarded as having been made good by such a possession, and that for any subsequent eviction by one having a better title, the grantee or his assignee has no remedy upon his covenant of seisin, but must rely upon that of warranty, if such covenant be contained in his deed. In other words, in some of the States a covenant of seisin is one *in presenti*, which can be broken, if at all, only when the deed is delivered, and consequently cannot run with the land to a future grantee, while in other States it is held to be a covenant annexed to the land, running with the same, and to be availed of, upon any future breach, by an heir or assignee of the covenantee.

Thus in Ohio, the courts hold, that "it is a real covenant annexed to the land, and passes with it to the heir or assignee,

Com. 471, 472; 1 Smith, *Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 174; *Catlin v. Hurlburt*, 3 Verm. 403, 407; *Morrison v. Underwood*, 20 N. H. 369; *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 119, 123; *Swasey v. Brooks*, 30 Verm. 692; *Mott v. Palmer*, 1 Comst. 573; *Wilson v. Cochran*, 46 Penn. St. 229, 231; *Hall v. Plaine*, 14 Ohio St. 422; *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 354; *Hamilton v. Wilson*, 4 Johns. 72; *Donnell v. Thompson*, 10 Me. 170.

¹ *Kingdon v. Nottle*, 1 Maule & S. 355, s. c. 4 Id. 53. The Statute of Maine gives the assignee of a grantee a right to maintain an action upon a covenant of seisin against the covenantor. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 82, § 16.

² *Martin v. Baker*, 5 Blackf. 232.

³ *Mitchell v. Warner*, 5 Conn. 497, 504; *Clark v. Swift*, 3 Met. 390, 392. See also *Moore v. Merrill*, 17 N. H. 79; *Shep. Touch.* 170.

until he who has the paramount title may assert it, and evict the person in possession, when it becomes a mere claim to damages to be enforced by him who has been evicted."¹ The covenant, as thus construed, becomes one of indemnity, not an [*651] undertaking, *merely, that the grantor's title is absolutely good, but that the grantee shall be saved harmless if it prove defective, and he is deprived of his estate.² And to that extent it has the same operation as a covenant of warranty; which is now the English doctrine.³ In Massachusetts, on the other hand, the court held, in *Marston v. Hobbs*, that to sustain a covenant of *lawful seisin*, and *right to convey*, which are regarded as synonymous, it was not necessary that the covenantor should be seised of an indefeasible title, but that a seisin in fact, was sufficient, whether he gained it by his own act of disseisin, or was in under a prior disseisor. If at the time he executed the deed he had the exclusive possession of the premises, claiming the same in fee-simple, by a title adverse to that of the owner, he was seised in fee, and had a right to convey. Nor is it necessary that the grantor in possession should have a legal title.⁴ And in *Twambly v. Henley*, this was followed by a ruling, that the covenant of good right to convey, amounted to a covenant that the lands should pass by the conveyance, and was not broken if the covenantor was, in fact, seised either by wrong or by a defeasible title.⁵

6. The more recent case of *Slater v. Rawson*, not only sustained the doctrine above stated, but established the further doctrine, that if one in actual possession, under a claim of right, conveys land with covenants of seisin and warranty, a seisin thereby passes by the deed, and with it enough of estate to attach to it the covenant of warranty, and that the latter would run with the land to the grantee of such covenantee. The facts of this case were, in brief, these: Jacobs was the owner of a

¹ *Backus v. McCoy*, 3 Ohio, 211, 221; *Foots v. Burnet*, 10 Ohio, 312, 332; *Devore v. Sunderland*, 17 Ohio, 52, 60.

² 1 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 174.

³ Walk. Am. Law, 382, 383.

⁴ *Beddoe v. Wadsworth*, 21 Wend. 124; *Wilson v. Widenham*, 51 Me. 567; *Griffin v. Fairbrother*, 10 Me. 95.

⁵ *Marston v. Hobbs*, 2 Mass. 433; *Twambly v. Henley*, 4 Mass. 439; *Bearce v. Jackson*, 4 Mass. 408; *Prescott v. Trueman*, 4 Mass. 627, 631; *Raymond v. Raymond*, 10 Cush. 134, 140; 4 Dane, Abr. 339.

parcel of uninclosed woodland; Rawson, under a claim of title to the land, went upon it from time to time, cutting wood and timber thereon without being disturbed by Jacobs in these acts of possession. He then conveyed it, with covenants of seisin and warranty, to the plaintiff's grantor. Jacobs having *claimed the land, the plaintiff yielded to his title, [*652] and brought an action upon the defendant's covenant of warranty. It was objected that, as Jacob's seisin was not defeated by these acts of Rawson, and as there could be but one seisin of land, when Rawson conveyed, he had no seisin, and no estate passed by his deed which would carry the covenant of warranty, so as to entitle the present plaintiff to sue upon it as assignee, by virtue of his deed from Rawson's grantee. But it was held, that though the seisin of Jacobs was not affected by the acts of possession of Rawson, he acquired thereby, as to all the world besides, such a seisin as enabled him to convey an estate in the premises which carried with it the covenant of warranty which ran with the land.¹

7. From the apparent inconsistency of regarding the covenant of seisin as broken as soon as made, and yet holding the deed, in which it is contained, to convey so much estate in the land as to carry with it the covenant of warranty, it would seem that in such a case as *Slater v. Rawson*, the covenant of seisin would be saved. And such seems to be the doctrine maintained, more or less directly, in several of the cases above cited,² although Mr. Rawle remarks that "it does not necessarily follow that such a seisin will support a covenant for seisin."³

8. There is a class of cases which impugn the doctrine main-

¹ *Slater v. Rawson*, 1 Met. 450, 6 Id. 439; *Beddoe v. Wadsworth*, 21 Wend. 120; *Fitzhugh v. Croghan*, 2 J. J. Marsh. 429; *Cushman v. Blanchard*, 2 Me. 266, 268; *Dickinson v. Hoopes*, 8 Gratt. 353, 397, expressly affirming *Slater v. Rawson*; *Fowler v. Poling*, 2 Barb. 300, 304, s. o. 6 Barb. 165; *Griffin v. Fairbrother*, 10 Me. 91, 95; 1 *Smith, Lead. Cas.*, 5th Am. ed. 157; *Backus v. McCoy*, 3 Ohio, 218; *Devore v. Sunderland*, 17 Ohio, 218. Chancellor Kent does not favor the doctrine. 4 *Kent, Com.* 471, n.; *Bartholomew v. Candee*, 14 Pick. 167; *Willard v. Twichell*, 1 N. H. 177, overruled *arguendo* in *Barker v. Brown*, 15 N. H. 176, 187; *Overfield v. Christie*, 7 S. & R. 177.

² *Fowler v. Poling*, 2 Barb. 304, 305; *Dickinson v. Hoopes*, 8 Gratt. 396; *Cushman v. Blanchard*, 11 Me. 269; *Willard v. Twichell*, 1 N. H. 175; *Marston v. Hobbs*, 2 Mass. 433.

³ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 53, n. See also 4 *Kent, Com.* 471 and note.

tained in *Marston v. Hobbs*, and some other of the cases above cited, that actual seisin and possession of granted premises by the grantor, when he makes his deed, supports his [*658] *covenant that he is lawfully seised. And Mr. Rawle says that the doctrine is confined to the States in which the cases arose, and has not passed without contradiction in others.¹ In New Hampshire, the doctrine is severely criticised in the opinion of Parker, Ch. J., in *Parker v. Brown*, and it is maintained, that a covenant that one is lawfully seised, is not supported by a seisin which may be good against all but the true owner, since it is not a seisin in the party's own right in fee. "Parties," says the Chief Justice, "not conversant with the law, ordinarily understand this covenant as an assurance of a title, and we are of opinion that they have the right so to understand it," "that the deed may transmit a seisin, in virtue of which and a possession under it, the grantee may obtain evidence of an indefeasible fee-simple, does not show that the terms of the covenant are fulfilled."² If the court mean by the covenant of seisin being one of assurance of title, what that term ordinarily implies, it seems to go the whole length of affirming that such covenants run with the land, as it is laid down in broad terms that "all covenants concerning title run with the land, with the exception of those that are broken before the land passes."³ So that, instead of being a covenant *in presenti*, it is both present and future in its operation, and in its future operations is like that of warranty. In *Lockwood v. Sturdevant*, the court of Connecticut, after remarking in regard to *Marston v. Hobbs* and *Twambly v. Henley*, that "if these determinations are considered as law, they will not aid the party citing them," take occasion to comment upon and dissent from the law of these cases. The case under consideration was one where the covenant declared on was that the grantor was seised "as of a good *indefeasible* es-

¹ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 26; 4 Kent, Com. 471, note; *Kincaid v. Britain*, 5 Sneed, 120.

² *Parker v. Brown*, 15 N. H. 176, 187, reaffirmed in *Partridge v. Hatch*, 18 N. H. 498. See also *Mills v. Catlin*, 22 Verm. 106; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Iowa, 294.

³ 4 Kent, Com. 473; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 333; that covenants of seisin do not run with the land, 2 Sugd. Vend., Ham. ed. 458, and note. *Griffin v. Fairbrother*, 10 Me. 95. See *Backus v. M'Coy*, 3 Ham. 219, following *Kingdon v. Nettle*.

tate in fee-simple" when, in fact, he had only a life estate. In the opinion of the court, it is said: "A seisin, in fact, as it has been called, is not an indefeasible estate, and a seisin for life is not an estate in fee."¹ A covenant of this *special character, as will be shown hereafter, is re- [*654] garded as essentially different from the ordinary covenant of seisin, and, therefore, did not seem to call for this criticism. Questions analogous to these have arisen, and been considered by the court of Vermont, in one of which reference is made to the case of *Marston v. Hobbs*, and a distinction is recognized between a covenant that the grantor "is lawfully seised in fee," and that he is "seised of an indefeasible estate in fee-simple." The case was a peculiar one, and was between the original parties where the land, when conveyed, was in a state of nature, and the covenantor had no title to it beyond mere possession when he made his deed, and the grantee was never disturbed in his possession until, by lapse of time, he had acquired an undisputed title to the land by the statute of limitations. The plaintiff, in an action upon the covenant of seisin, recovered nominal damages. The court refer to *Abbot v. Allen*, sustaining the distinction between a covenant of seisin and one of seisin of an indefeasible estate, in which case, *Marston v. Hobbs* is referred to upon the same point.² In *Catlin v. Hurlburt*, the court examine the original doctrine of covenants of seisin, and suggest that they were introduced into deeds to guard against such an adverse possession as would render the deed void, as would have been the case at common law, and, as is stated by the court, "is now the case by virtue of our statute, if there be an adverse possession." "While we had no such statute," they add, "in this State, and there was no special reason for inserting that covenant, except to follow existing forms, the phraseology of that covenant has been varied, and it has generally been considered synonymous with covenant of title, and frequently has been so worded as necessarily to be a covenant of title." So that the character of the covenant in that State seems to depend chiefly upon local law.³

¹ *Lockwood v. Sturdevant*, 6 Conn. 374, 386.

² *Garfield v. Williams*, 2 Verm. 327; *Abbot v. Allen*, 14 Johns. 248, 252.

³ *Catlin v. Hurlburt*, 3 Verm. 403-407. See *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Iowa, 295.

9. Much, therefore, must depend, in determining the effect to be given to covenants of seisin, upon the meaning [*655] which *courts attach to the term. If it is limited to the mere fact of being in possession under a claim of right, then such possession will support it, and the absence of it will be a breach, and the language of a large number of cases is thereby sustained, that the covenant of seisin is broken, if at all, as soon as made. And Mr. Rawle, in reference to the effect of possession in supporting the covenant of seisin, remarks: "There is one point of view from which the construction thus given to this covenant, might readily appear to be correct. Since possession, enduring for a sufficient length of time, will, under the limitation acts, ripen into a good title, there would seem reason for holding that such possession should be regarded as an actual estate, from the moment of its commencement, and, therefore, that the seisin which this covenant purports to assure, might properly be used in its old signification, and not, as has been more recently the case, as synonymous with title."¹ Whatever is asserted by the deed to be true, or covenanted therein to be true, as that the covenantor is seised, or lawfully seised, must be true or false at that time, and will not become otherwise by any subsequent event. And if, for instance, he is in possession, and covenants that he has a right to convey the estate to another, it is just as true after having been in such possession a month or a year, as it would be if this possession had been continued nineteen years and three hundred and sixty days. And if the covenant is broken as soon as made, it is difficult to understand how it can afterwards run with the land, through subsequent conveyances, to after purchasers as assignees.

10. It seems, from the statement of Mr. Rawle, that, while in this country, "seised" and "lawfully seised" are but different forms of the same covenant, and identical in effect;² in the early English cases, these terms were held to mean the same as "seised of an *indefeasible* estate."³ The effect of the latter covenant in this country, when expressly made, is uni- [*656] formly *held to extend further than that of the ordi-

¹ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 23, 24.

² Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 20; 4 Dane, Abr. 339.

³ Rawle, Cov. 20.

nary covenant of seisin, and to cover an existing outstanding title adverse to that of the grantor. It is intended to meet the case where one is in possession, and his grantee wishes for a remedy, if he shall discover that a third person has a better title which, for any reason, he does not see fit to enforce by eviction, so as to lay a foundation for an action by the grantee upon his covenant of warranty. The damages in an action upon such a covenant may be merely nominal, as in the case above cited of *Garfield v. Williams*, where the plaintiff had been suffered to enjoy undisturbed possession under his conveyance till his title had become consummated by the statute of limitation.¹ This latter form of the covenant of seisin, though not in general use in this country, is fully recognized, in the distinction between its terms and those in which such covenant is usually framed, by many of the cases, among which the following may be referred to.² It may be remarked in passing, that if the covenant of seisin is deemed to be broken by a mere want of title in the grantor, who is in possession under a claim of right, and conveys the land with the usual covenant of warranty as well as of seisin, and if the grantor's deed conveys the possession so that the grantee may avail himself of it in giving him an estate in the land, it is difficult to see why the covenantor may not be subjected to two actions if the title fails in the grantee of his vendee, by an entry and eviction by him who has the paramount title, one in favor of his immediate covenantee upon the covenant of seisin, and the other in favor of the assignee of the covenantee upon the covenant of warranty.

11. In one respect the authorities seem to be uniform, and the rule of law the same in all the States, except where the subject is controlled by local statute, and that is if the grantor has no possession of land, either by himself or by another, where he undertakes to convey it by deed, and enters into a *covenant of seisin therein, nothing passes by [*657] his deed, and this covenant is broken at once; nor can

¹ *Garfield v. Williams*, 2 Verm. 328. See *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. 30; *Bender v. Fromberger*, 4 Dall. 439; *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 123.

² *Preston v. Trueman*, 4 Mass. 627, 631; *Abbot v. Allen*, 14 Johns. 248, 252; *Smith v. Strong*, 14 Pick. 128; *Collier v. Gamble*, 10 Mo. 467, 472; *Raymond v. Raymond*, 10 Cush. 134, 140; *Bender v. Fromberger*, 4 Dall. 436, 439.

he be made liable thereon to any assignee to whom his grantee may undertake to convey the estate.¹ And the cases cited below, as well as some others already referred to, state the doctrine as one of general application, that a proper covenant of seisin is broken, if at all, as soon as made.²

12. In respect to what constitutes a breach of the covenant of seisin, it has been held that the existence of an easement or incumbrance upon the land, like a highway, or a mortgage, or an equitable lien, is not such a breach, if possession has not been taken under such mortgage.³ But the existence of an outstanding life estate would constitute a breach, and Mr. Rawle suggests that an outstanding term of years might also have this effect.⁴ But it has been held, that if premises, when granted, are in the possession of another as tenant of the grantor, which was known to the grantee at the time the deed was made, such possession is not a breach of the covenants in the grantor's deed. The tenant becomes the tenant of the grantee, and the possession of the tenant becomes his possession.⁵ Such would be the case if the quantity of land expressly granted and described is materially less than would answer to such description, at least such seems to be the rule in South Carolina.⁶ And the covenant of seisin would be broken if there were no such land in existence as that described and purported to be conveyed in the covenantor's deed.⁷ And, generally, where a part of the thing granted is not owned by

¹ 1 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 159; *Slater v. Rawson*, 1 Met. 450; *Devore v. Sunderland*, 17 Ohio, 60; *Greenby v. Wilcocks*, 2 Johns. 1; *Dickinson v. Hoomes*, 8 Gratt. 397; 4 Kent, Com. 471; *Pollard v. Dwight*, 4 Cranch, 430; *Walk. Am. Law*, 382; *Garfield v. Williams*, 2 Verm. 327; *Bartholomew v. Candee*, 14 Pick. 170; *Mitchell v. Warner*, 5 Conn. 497.

² *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 110; *Walk. Am. Law*, 382; *Fowler v. Poling*, 2 Barb. 303; *Cushman v. Blanchard*, 2 Me. 269; *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. 30, 35; *Griffin v. Fairbrother*, 10 Me. 95; *Bickford v. Page*, 2 Mass. 455; *Wilson v. Cochran*, 46 Penn. St. 231.

³ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 51; *Fitzhugh v. Croghan*, 2 J.J. Marsh. 429, 437, 439; *Whitbeck v. Cook*, 15 Johns. 483; *Reasoner v. Edmondson*, 5 Ind. 393; *Mills v. Catlin*, 22 Verm. 98, 106.

⁴ *Rawle, Cov.* 52.

⁵ *Lindley v. Dakin*, 13 Ind. 388.

⁶ *Pringle v. Witten*, 1 Bay, 256. See *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 123.

⁷ *Wheelock v. Thayer*, 16 Pick. 68, 70; *Bacon v. Lincoln*, 4 Cush. 210; *Barford v. Pearson*, 9 Allen, 389.

the covenantor, but is owned by another.¹ As if one of two tenants in common convey the entire estate with covenants of seisin, the covenant as to one half the estate would be broken at once, and the purchaser might recover back one half the purchase-money.² And where one owning land on which was a spring of water, granted to another the right to take the water by pipes and carry it on to other land, and then sold his estate with covenants, it was held that there was thereby a breach of the covenant of seisin in respect to the spring.³ So if there are buildings, or fences, or other fixtures standing upon and attached to premises conveyed with covenants of seisin, and these buildings, &c. belong to other persons who have a right to remove them, the covenant of seisin will, if no exception of these is made in the grant, be broken; and *the [*658] purchaser of the estate may, in an action thereon, recover the value of such buildings and fixtures.⁴ But one in possession under a patent who conveys with covenants of seisin, would not be liable thereon, because such patent was voidable, and with it the title to the premises.⁵ And if one purchases of another, with covenants of seisin, lands of which he is himself in possession, and to which he has a good title, and these facts were known to him at the time of taking his deed, he could not recover of his covenantor in an action for a breach of such covenant.⁶

13. Much that has been said of the covenant of seisin and right to convey, may be applied to the covenant against incumbrances. If there be an incumbrance, the covenant, being *in presenti*, is broken as soon as made.⁷ But incumbrances are so various in their description and character, that the same rule cannot well be applied to all. Some of them, like an existing right of way over the premises, or a permanent easement,

¹ *Mott v. Palmer*, 1 Comst. 564; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 295; *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. (Law,) 35.

² *Downer v. Smith*, 38 Verm. 468.

³ *Clark v. Conroe*, 38 Verm. 469.

⁴ *Mott v. Palmer*, 1 Comst. 564, 572, case of a fence; *West v. Stewart*, 7 Penn. St. 122, case of a building; *Powers v. Dennison*, 30 Verm. 752; *Van Wagner v. Van Nostrand*, 19 Iowa, 427.

⁵ *Pollard v. Dwight*, 4 Cranch, 430, 432.

⁶ *Fitch v. Baldwin*, 17 Johns. 161.

⁷ *Cathcart v. Bowman*, 5 Penn. St. 317; *Clark v. Swift*, 3 Met. 392.

are as much incumbrances when the deed is made as they ever can be, and, of course, actually diminish and detract from the value of the estate at that time. Other incumbrances, like an existing right of dower, or an outstanding mortgage, may or may not impair the value of the premises conveyed, according as these claims are or are not enforced. The person entitled to dower may die before having it set out, or the mortgagor may pay the mortgage debt and relieve the estate. If, in the cases first supposed, the covenantee sues upon his covenant, he recovers the damage which the estate sustains by the existence of such a permanent incumbrance. In the other, he can only recover nominal damages until it shall have been ascertained that the widow or mortgagee will enforce their claim, and he has paid or satisfied the same.¹ Suppose that such a grantee

conveys the estate to a third person, by a deed of quit-
[*659] claim or other *deed not of warranty, and the dower right or mortgage is then enforced, for the first time, against the last-named purchaser, and regarding the first grantor's covenant, as to these incumbrances, as one *in presenti*, the second purchaser would be without remedy against him, being a mere assignee of a covenant, broken before assignment made. But if he shall be evicted by the enforcement of the widow or mortgagee's claim, these being paramount titles to his, he may avail himself of the covenant of warranty, if there were one contained in the first deed, disregarding altogether that against incumbrances.²

14. An incumbrance, within the terms of the covenant against them, is said to be "every right to, or interest in, the

¹ *Prescott v. Trueman*, 4 Mass. 627, 629; *Thayer v. Clemence*, 22 Pick. 490, 493; *Clark v. Swift*, 3 Met. 390, 392; *Wyman v. Ballard*, 12 Mass. 304; *Tufts v. Adams*, 8 Pick. 547; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 111-114; *Id.* 347; *Whitney v. Dinsmore*, 6 Cush. 127; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 62; *Andrews v. Davison*, 17 N. H. 416.

² *Sprague v. Baker*, 17 Mass. 586, where Wilde, J., intimates, that in such a case as is supposed in the text, the purchaser might recover upon the covenant against incumbrances, and clearly might upon covenant of warranty. *Tufts v. Adams*, 8 Pick. 547; *Thayer v. Clemence*, 22 Pick. 490, 494; *Whitney v. Dinsmore*, 6 Cush. 124, 128. In *Foot v. Burnet*, 10 Ohio, 317, 333, the court held that a covenant against incumbrances ran with the land, as, in a former case, they had held was the case with covenants of seisin. *Backus v. McCoy*, 3 Ohio, 211. See also *M'Crady v. Brisbane*, 1 Nott & McC. 104.

land, to the diminution of the value of the land, but consistent with the passage of the fee by the conveyance.¹ An inchoate right of dower is an incumbrance within the meaning of the covenant against these.² So a condition, the non-performance of which by the grantee may work a forfeiture of the estate, is also an incumbrance.³ But the fact that the land conveyed is covered with water is not an incumbrance, whether it be by a natural pond or artificial flowing, if done without right by the grantor or a stranger. The remedy of the grantee in such a case is in a different form from an action upon his covenant.⁴ So is a paramount title, and the existence of such an outstanding title is a breach of this covenant,⁵ or an existing lien for taxes.⁶ But in Louisiana a vendor is not bound by his warranty in respect to servitudes which are apparent, but would be, if they were non-apparent.⁷ In Pennsylvania the court held a highway across the granted premises, which had existed thirty years, not to constitute an incumbrance within the meaning of the covenants in a deed. But a private way would be an incumbrance.⁸ And a covenant which runs with the land, creating a charge thereon, is also deemed an incumbrance. Such, for instance, as a covenant to maintain a division fence along the entire line between the granted premises and lands adjoining them.⁹ But it seems that a clause in the grantor's deed that the grantee, his heirs and assigns, shall maintain a fence along the line of the granted land, is a personal obligation alone, and not an incumbrance binding the estate.¹⁰ And where the maintaining a fence between two parcels is imposed upon one

¹ *Prescott v. Trueman*, 4 Mass. 627, 630; *Cary v. Daniels*, 8 Met. 482.

² *Shearer v. Ranger*, 22 Pick. 447; *Jenks v. Ward*, 4 Met. 412; *Fletcher v. State Bank*, 37 N. H. 397. But see *Bostwick v. Williams*, 36 Ill. 69; *Powell v. Monson Co.* 3 Mason, 355.

³ *Jenks v. Ward*, *sup.*

⁴ *Kidder v. George*, 18 N. H. 572.

⁵ *Cornell v. Jackson*, 3 Cush. 309.

⁶ *Long v. Moler*, 5 Ohio, n. s. 271; *Mitchell v. Pillsbury*, 5 Wis. 407.

⁷ *Lallande v. Wentz*, 18 La. An. 290.

⁸ *Wilson v. Cochran*, 46 Penn. St. 232; *Butler v. Gale*, 27 Verm. 739; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 116, 117; *contra*, *Kellogg v. Ingersoll*, 2 Mass. 101; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 119, note.

⁹ *Kellogg v. Robinson*, 6 Verm. 276. See *Duffy v. N. Y. & Harl. R. R.* 2 Hilton, 496.

¹⁰ *Parish v. Whitney*, 3 Gray, 516; *Plymouth v. Carver*, 16 Pick. 183.

of the owners, he is to construct it of a reasonable and suitable width, height, and materials, and is at liberty to place it in equal parts on each side of the dividing line.¹ A right in the owner of a mill to enter upon the land of another and clear the channel of the stream, is not an incumbrance upon the premises, but the exercise of a natural right.² Nor does it affect the rights of the parties claiming under the covenant against incumbrances, that the existence of the incumbrances complained of was known to the covenantee when the conveyance was made.³ If, when a party grants his estate with covenants against incumbrances, there is a process like partition pending, which is afterwards consummated, and the purchaser wholly divested of his title, it is a breach of this covenant, and under it he may recover back the purchase-money paid.⁴ But the definition is, of course, a general one, embracing a great variety of things which would be accounted incumbrances, many of which are collected by Mr. Rawle, to whose work the reader is again referred.⁵ An outstanding condition, which may defeat the title to the estate granted, is not deemed an incumbrance within the meaning of a covenant against incumbrances.⁶

14 *a.* The covenant against incumbrances, thus far considered, has related to something existing at the time of making the deed, which has been held to constitute an incumbrance. Such covenants being *in presenti*, and being broken as soon as made, cannot, for obvious reasons, run with the estate to subsequent owners, so as to entitle them to sue for the breach thereof. Such a covenant must, obviously, be an inadequate remedy in those cases where the incumbrance exists at the time of making the deed, but is inchoate, so far as occasioning loss or damage to the purchaser is concerned. Besides the cases above stated of a right of dower, or an outstanding mortgage, the value or amount of which it may not be possible to ascer-

¹ Newell v. Hill, 2 Met. 180.

² Prescott v. Williams, 5 Met. 429.

³ Hovey v. Newton, 7 Pick. 29; Long v. Moler, 5 Ohio, n. s. 271; Medler v. Hiatt, 8 Ind. 171; Snyder v. Lane, 10 Ind. 424; Kincaid v. Brittain, 5 Sneed, 119, 125; Funk v. Teneida, 11 S. & R. 112.

⁴ Chapel v. Bull, 17 Mass. 213; Funk v. Creswell, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 62.

⁵ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 113, *et seq.*

⁶ Estabrook v. Smith, 6 Gray, 572, 576.

tain until after the covenantee shall have parted with his estate to a third party, may be the case of an attachment outstanding upon the land, or a judgment lien which the creditor may never enforce, or, if at all, not until the vendee shall have conveyed his estate. In such cases the actual damages arising from the lien do not accrue until the estate shall have passed into a third person's hands, who, upon the well-settled doctrine upon the subject, cannot sue upon this covenant. Wilde, J., as stated in the note in *Sprague v. Baker*, was inclined to hold that this covenant did run with the land, so far as to allow the purchaser to recover for such new damages as should arise to him as the owner, while he was such. But this doctrine was afterwards overruled, and the law in this country, as to existing incumbrances, may be considered as settled.¹ In England, there is a covenant usually inserted in deeds, as to title for indemnity against incumbrances. It is future in its character, and intended to be. In the words of Mr. Platt: "It is not a covenant that the estate is free, and shall remain free from incumbrances, but that the purchaser shall enjoy it free from such incumbrances."² And in all these cases, where the incumbrance is of a nature to work an eviction of the purchaser as the terre-tenant, he may always protect himself under a covenant of warranty, which runs with the land, as was the case in *Tufts v. Adams*.³ But may there not be inchoate rights in respect to land existing at the time of a conveyance, which are not, in themselves, incumbrances, but may become such at a future time, and, before they become such, the grantee, with a covenant against incumbrances, may convey the estate to a third person by a deed of quitclaim, and where, if the covenant against incumbrances does not run with the land, such second purchaser would be wholly without indemnity or relief? Suppose A, while the owner of lands, conveys to B a right of way across them, upon strictly a condition precedent, such, for instance, as that he shall erect a house, construct a bridge across a stream, or some such act, with which the way is to be used as an easement; and A should then convey this land to J. S.,

¹ Rawle, Cov. 346; *Whitney v. Dinsmore*, 6 Cush. 124.

² Platt, Cov. 330; Rawle, Cov. 109.

³ *Tufts v. Adams*, 8 Pick. 547.

with a covenant of seisin, and that the premises are free of incumbrances, and also of warranty. Subsequently, J. S. conveys this land, by deed of quitclaim, to J. N., and while he is the owner, and in possession of it, B erects his house, or performs the condition whereby the right to this easement becomes consummated. If J. N. cannot sue upon this covenant, as running with the estate, is he not wholly without remedy, and has not the vendor, in that way, wholly escaped liability under his covenants? Such as an incumbrance is not a breach of the covenant of seisin, nor does it seem to be of the covenant of warranty, since it does not work an eviction of the tenant. Would it not be necessary to refer such a case to the general principles governing covenants of title, rather than the rules which have been laid down as to covenants against incumbrances not running with the land? The rule upon the general subject is thus stated: "It is a settled rule, on both sides of the Atlantic, that until breach, the covenants for title, without distinction between them, run with the land, to heirs and assignees."¹ And the language of Wilde, J., in the case of *Sprague v. Baker*, already cited, in respect to the right of an assignee to recover upon a covenant as to title, bears directly upon the same point: "He is principally interested in the covenant, and those covenants run with the land in which the owner is solely or principally interested, and which are necessary for the maintenance of his rights. Covenant lies by an assignee on every covenant which concerns land."² It would seem, therefore, that the covenant against incumbrances may run with the land, and may be sued by whoever is the owner of the land, if the same be not, in fact, broken, until such owner shall have acquired title to the premises, provided the incumbrance shall be of such a nature, that when it takes effect to impair the value of the premises, it relates back to the time of making the deed and covenant.

15. The broadest and most effective of the covenants contained in American deeds, is that of warranty, which, as has already been remarked, in some of the States, is the only one in

¹ 4 Kent, Com. 473; Rawle, Cov. 336.

² *Sprague v. Baker*, 17 Mass. 586. See *Kallogg v. Robinson*, 6 Verm. 276, 280.

general use.¹ It is future in its terms and operation, and *runs with the estate, in respect to which it is [*660] made, into the hands of whoever becomes the owner of such estate. But if once broken by an eviction, the covenant of warranty stands upon the same ground as the covenants which are broken as soon as made.² It is not only a means of obtaining recompense for the loss of the land so held, but it often operates to create a title to land by way of estoppel, even against the grantee of the warrantor, by preventing a party from setting up an otherwise good title to the same,³ as where one having no title to land, conveys it, with a covenant of warranty, and afterwards acquires a title to the same, he is estopped to claim the land, and this extends to his second grantee in favor of the covenantee. And, in some cases, an heir is thereby rebutted from claiming, by another and better title, the land which his ancestor had conveyed with warranty, if such heir receives assets from his ancestor, the covenantor, sufficient to make good such warranty.⁴ And one thing is to be observed, in giving the effect above stated to the covenant of warranty, where no estate passes by the deed, that by means of the estoppel the covenant attaches to the estate as soon as the covenantor acquires it, although until then there was no estate with which it could be held to run.*

16. Though the covenant of warranty in a deed is now a per-

* NOTE. — By the law of Missouri, one who conveys land, with covenant of warranty, may attach the covenant to the seisin, so as to run to assignees, although, at the time of conveying the land, he had no seisin thereof. *Vancourt v. Moore*, 26 Mo. 92.

¹ Rawle, *Cov.*, 3d ed. 203, note, mentions, generally, that such is the case in the Southern and Western States, as well as Pennsylvania, and quotes the language of *Lumpkin, J.*, of Georgia, that in twenty-five years' practice he never saw a deed with the covenant of seisin, against incumbrances or for further assurance. *Leary v. Durham*, 4 Ga. 593, 601; *Dickinson v. Hoomes*, 8 Gratt. 353, 399. But see *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 120.

² *Wilson v. Cochran*, 45 Penn. St. 229.

³ *Walk. Am. Law*, 383; *White v. Patten*, 24 Pick. 324; *Allen v. Sayward*, 5 Me. 231; *Somes v. Skinner*, 3 Pick. 52; *Jackson v. Stevens*, 13 Johns. 316; *Jackson v. Murray*, 12 Johns. 201; *Kimball v. Blaisdell*, 5 N. H. 533; *Terrett v. Taylor*, 9 Cranch, 53; ante, ch. 2, § 6, pl. 35.

⁴ *Bates v. Norcross*, 17 Pick. 1431; *Cole v. Raymond*, 9 Gray, 217; *Torrey v. Minor*, 1 S. & M. Ch. 489.

sonal one, binding the warrantor and his personal representatives, it is important to understand, somewhat, the nature and character of the remedy for which it has become a substitute. This is principally important when the measure of the recompense for a breach of such covenant is considered. The covenant answering to this in English deeds, is that for quiet enjoyment.* And as synonymous with that for quiet enjoyment, it can only be broken by something equivalent to an eviction or disturbance of possession of grantee. It is not, therefore, broken by an outstanding incumbrance like an inchoate right of dower. The covenant extends to lawful disturbances only, and not to tortious acts. And if the covenantor do the acts, he must, in order to make it a breach of the covenant, do them under the claim and assertion of a right.¹ So if the covenantee find another in possession under a paramount right, when he takes his deed, he may have an action upon this covenant, without being obliged to subject himself to the hazard of an action of trespass by first entering upon the premises, and being ousted.²

[*661] *17. The doctrine of warranty is of feudal origin, and, as anciently understood and practised, involved the application of a system of rules of great subtlety and refinement. It grew out of the relation of lord and vassal, in respect

* NOTE. — The form of this covenant is as follows: "And that it shall be lawful for the said grantee, his heirs and assigns, from time to time, and at all times, hereafter, peaceably and quietly to enter upon, and have, hold, occupy, possess, and enjoy the said lands and premises hereby conveyed, or intended so to be, with their and every of their appurtenances, and to have, receive, and take the rents, issues, and profits thereof, to and for his and their use and benefit, without any let, suit, trouble, denial, eviction, interruption, claim, or demand whatsoever, of, from, or by him, the said grantor, or his heirs, or any other person or persons whomsoever." Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 163. By recurring to page *610, of this work, the reader may see the form of a covenant of warranty, substantially such as is in general use in this country, and can compare the redundancy of terms in the one with the terse brevity of the other. See *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 68.

¹ *Beebe v. Swartwout*, 3 Gilm. 179, 181; *Bostwick v. Williams*, 36 Ill. 69, 70.

² *Clark v. Conroe*, 38 Verm. 469; *contra*, *Kortz v. Carpenter*, 5 Johns. 120; but the text sustained *Grist v. Hodges*, 3 Dev. 200; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 253, 254. Whether a mere easement can be a breach of warranty, see Rawle, Cov. 293, 3d ed.; *Wilson v. Cochran*, *sup.* p. 233.

to the land which the former gave to the latter, and for which he was to receive in return the services prescribed by the terms of the tenure by which the latter held it. Upon accepting homage, the lord became bound, among other things, to defend the title of the land for which the vassal had done the homage. If the tenant's title was disputed, he might vouch in the lord to defend it, and if he was evicted, the lord was bound to give him other land, by way of recompense, equal in value to that he had lost.¹ Space will not admit of tracing the steps through which warranty, as a remedy, passed, from the time when, upon a *warrantia chartæ*, the plaintiff recovered other lands equal in value to the lands lost, to the substitution of a personal action for the recovery of damages instead of land, which seems to have become established about the time of the settlement of this country. The ancient form of remedy is now become wholly obsolete.²

18. This covenant of warranty, to repeat, is a personal one, and is, in effect, a covenant for quiet enjoyment.³ As a personal covenant it may be barred, like any other personal obligation, by the statute of limitations. But such bar would not affect it as an estoppel or rebutter, in its effect upon the title to land in favor of the covenantee.⁴ But if before a breach, the grantor who makes the covenant takes a reconveyance of the estate, it extinguishes the covenant, nor can it be revived by a new conveyance without a new express covenant.⁵

*19. In the next place, it is a covenant that runs [*662] with the estate in reference to which it is made, and may be availed of by suit in his own name, by any one to whom the same shall come by deed, even after several successive conveyances, or a descent or devise.⁶ It is often difficult to distin-

¹ Stearns, Real Act. 121; 2 Bl. Com. 300.

² Gore v. Brazier, 3 Mass. 523, 543; Roll v. Osborn, Hob. 20; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 210, 211; 4 Kent, Com. 472; Caldwell v. Kirkpatrick, 6 Ala. 60; Townsend v. Morris, 6 Cow. 123, 126; Marston v. Hobbs, 2 Mass. 432, 437; 1 Smith, Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 158, 166-168; Co. Lit. 384 a, Butler's note, 332.

³ 4 Kent, Com. 472; Caldwell v. Kirkpatrick, 6 Ala. 60, 62; Townsend v. Morris, 6 Cow. 126; Fowler v. Poling, 2 Barb. 300, 303.

⁴ Cole v. Raymond, 9 Gray, 217. See Holden v. Fletcher, 6 Cush. 235.

⁵ Brown v. Metz, 33 Ill. 339.

⁶ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 352; Withy v. Mumford, 5 Cow. 137; Ford v. Walsworth, 19 Wend. 334, 337; White v. Whitney, 3 Met. 81, 86; Platt, Cov. 471; Dickinson

guish between covenants in gross and such as run with land, but a covenant of warranty seems to be clearly among those that will always run with land. In the first place, there is the requisite privity of estate between the grantor who is the covenantor, and the purchaser or holder of the land, in relation to which the covenant is entered into; in the next, the covenant for the title entered into, and formed a part or parcel of the contract by which, and of the consideration for which, the grant of the land was made, and whoever purchases the one is supposed to pay also for the other, and to become thereby substituted in all respects, in the place of the first covenantee, so far as the right of being indemnified for any failure by defect of title.¹

20. Consistently with the foregoing doctrine, the action for the breach of this covenant should be brought by him who is the owner of the land, and, as such, the assignee of the covenant, at the time it is broken.² Such covenant is, moreover,

* NOTE. — Although the subject of covenants running with an estate has been more than once spoken of, it may further be illustrated by examples of a less familiar character than those usually found in the books. Thus, one who had laid out a private street, from one public street to the land of another proprietor, across his own land, sold a lot bounding upon it, describing it as upon a new way or street now staked out, and to be opened by (the grantor), — feet wide, extending from M Street along on the northerly side of said lot, &c. westerly to land of, &c. It was held to be a covenant, not only that there was and should be a street along by the lot conveyed, but that it should extend from M Street to the other terminus mentioned, and that it was a covenant running with the land of the grantor, and binding his assignee. So that where the grantor had changed the direction of the street, and then sold the soil of it to one who built upon and obstructed it, at a point remote from the plaintiff's premises, he had a right of action therefor, against the party causing such obstruction. *Thomas v. Poole*, 7 Gray, 83. See also *Loring v. Otis*, 7 Gray, 563. A covenant, on the part of the grantee of an estate, to maintain a boundary fence along the side of the premises, is one that runs with the land, and binds subsequent owners claiming under him. *Kellogg v. Robinson*, 6 Verm. 276; *Duffy v. Harlem R. R.* 2 Hilton, 496; *Bally v. Wells*, 3 Wils. 45.

v. Hoomes, 8 Gratt. 353, 396; *Booth v. Starr*, 1 Conn. 244, 246; *De Chaumont v. Forsythe*, 2 Penn. 507, 514; *Chase v. Weston*, 12 N. H. 413; *Lawrence v. Senter*, 4 Sneed, 52; *Kellogg v. Robinson*, 6 Verm. 279; *Moore v. Merrill*, 17 N. H. 81; *Slater v. Rawson*, 1 Met. 450.

¹ *Hurd v. Curtis*, 19 Pick. 459.

² *Kane v. Sanger*, 4 Johns. 89, 93; *Bickford v. Page*, 2 Mass. 455, 460; 1 Smith,

susceptible of divisions into as many parts or interests as the land itself shall be divided into by subsequent successive conveyances, so that if A convey to B two parcels by one deed, with a covenant of warranty, and B sells one of them to C, who is evicted by an elder title of the parcel so purchased by him, he may have covenant in respect to the same against A.¹

*And even if one were to convey with covenant of [*663] warranty a parcel of land then under mortgage to another, and his grantee were to convey this right of redemption, or it was conveyed by a sheriff upon execution against him, the purchaser, as assignee thereof, may have an action upon the covenant of warranty, if evicted by the mortgagee, or, as it would seem, by any one having a paramount title.² Nor would it make any difference in the rights of a subsequent purchaser, as assignee of a covenant running with the land, that his immediate grantor warranted the same to him in his deed.³ So it was held to be no bar to an action by covenantee against covenantor, upon a covenant of warranty, that the former, when he purchased the estate, gave the latter a mortgage upon the same for a part of the purchase-money which is now outstanding. It would only go to affect the amount of damages.⁴

21. An exception, however, to the rule above stated, as to the party to sue for a breach of the covenant of warranty, exists, where the covenantee has himself conveyed the premises with warranty, and his grantee, upon being evicted, sues and recovers of him, instead of suing the original covenantor, as he might have done. In such a case, the first covenantee, upon satisfying the claim of the second, is remitted to his claim against his covenantor upon the original covenant. And this would be true if there had been a succession of convey-

Lead. Cas., 5th Am. ed. 163, 164. See *Niles v. Sawtell*, 7 Mass. 444; *Ford v. Walsworth*, 19 Wend. 334, 337; *Wheeler v. Sohler*, 3 Cush. 219, 222; *Griffin v. Fairbrother*, 10 Me. 81; *Thompson v. Sanders*, 5 Mon. 357; *Chase v. Weston*, 12 N. H. 413; *Wallace v. Vernon*, 1 Kerr, N. B. 5, 24.

¹ 2 Sugd. Vend., Hamm. ed. 508; *Dickinson v. Hoopes*, 8 Gratt. 353, 406; *Kane v. Sanger*, 14 Johns. 89, 94. See 3 Prest. Abst. 57, 58, *contra*.

² *White v. Whitney*, 3 Met. 81; *Redwine v. Brown*, 10 Ga. 311, 320. *Brown v. Metz*, 33 Ill. 339.

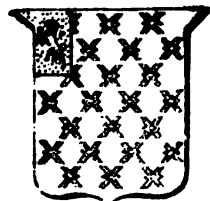
³ *Withy v. Mumford*, 5 Cow. 137; *De Chaumont v. Forsythe*, 2 Penn. 81, 507, 514; *Markland v. Crump*, 1 Dev. & B. 94.

⁴ *Davis v. Judd*, 6 Wis. 85; vide post, pl. 42.

VOL. III.

26

[714]



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ances with warranty, on the part of any one or more of the successive grantors, the tenant who is evicted may, in such case, sue any prior covenantor, and if he elects any one but the first, and obtains satisfaction for his claim, such covenantor may, thereby, stand as to any prior covenantor, in the place he held before he had parted with the estate, and sue upon his covenant as if the breach had occurred during his ownership.¹ In order to save a succession of suits in such cases, one who is sued in an action upon his covenant of warranty, may vouch in, as it is called, his warrantor, and he in turn may vouch in his, and a judgment in such action will be binding upon the rights of any such previous warrantor, so far as the subjects-matter tried in such suit are concerned, who has been properly vouched or summoned in to take the defence of the suit, whether he has done so or not. Nor is it essential that these notices should be matters of record.² So where a vendor is sued upon his covenant against incumbrances, if he hold a like deed with covenants from his grantor, and the incumbrance be an existing one at the time of both conveyances, he may vouch in his covenantor and thus bind him by the judgment against himself in the action.³

22. But a covenantee, who has parted with his estate to a second grantee with warranty, cannot recover of his covenantor upon his covenant, until he shall have satisfied his own covenantee for his damages, so that the first covenantor may not be liable to be twice charged.⁴

[*664] *23. It may be added, as a kind of corollary to what has gone before, that no one can release or discharge a covenant of warranty except the one who then holds the title to the estate, and that such discharge can only affect such sub-

¹ *Withy v. Mumford*, 5 Cow. 137; *Thompson v. Shattuck*, 2 Met. 618; *Snydam v. Jones*, 10 Wend. 184; *Thompson v. Sanders*, 5 Mon. 357; *Booth v. Starr*, 1 Conn. 244, 249; *Markland v. Crump*, 1 Dev. & B. 94; *Redwine v. Brown*, 10 Ga. 311, 317.

² *Chamberlain v. Preble*, 11 Allen, 373; *Boston v. Worthington*, 10 Gray, 498; *Littleton v. Richardson*, 34 N. H. 187; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 226; *Stearns, Real Act* 136; *Andrews v. Davison*, 16 N. H. 473; s. c. 17 N. H. 413.

³ *Andrews v. Davison*, 17 N. H. 416.

⁴ *Wheeler v. Sohler*, 3 Cush. 222, 223; *Booth v. Starr*, 1 Conn. 244; *Markland v. Crump*, 1 Dev. & B. 94.

sequent purchasers as have notice of the same when purchasing the estate.¹

24. As the covenant of warranty in American deeds answers in most respects, as has been observed, to the covenant for quiet enjoyment, it has been uniformly held, that in order to constitute a breach of such a covenant, there must be something tantamount to an eviction of the tenant, by some one having a better legal title. But it is not necessary that the act of eviction should affect the whole premises granted. It will be a breach of such covenant, if the covenantee is divested of any part of them. Thus, where a house of another person was standing on the land belonging to a grantor, and he sold the land with covenant of warranty, and afterwards the owner of the house removed it, it was held to be a breach of this covenant.² No act of a mere stranger, though under a pretence of title which is not a valid one, will operate as a breach of this covenant.³ In applying these general propositions, questions have arisen how far particular acts done by third persons in respect to the estate while in the possession of the covenantee, is a breach of the covenant of warranty. Thus it has been held, that the exercise of the right of eminent domain by the State, whereby some portion of a purchaser's land is taken, is not a breach of his grantor's covenant of warranty.⁴ And in England where an entry was made upon a lessee, who held under a lease with a covenant for quiet enjoyment, against all persons claiming under the lessor, and his property was seised to satisfy an outstanding land-tax, it was held not to be a breach of the covenant.⁵ On the other hand, if one having a legal claim, seeks to enforce it by expelling the tenant in possession, it is not necessary for him to wait for a judgment and actual ouster by process of law. He may yield possession to the one who has this paramount title, and claim for a breach of the

¹ *Leighton v. Perkins*, 2 N. H. 427.

² *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 88; *West v. Stewart*, 7 Penn. St. 122. See also *Mott v. Palmer*, 1 Comst. 564, where the covenant of seisin was held to be broken by want of title to a fence on the premises conveyed. Ante, pl. 12.

³ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 165; *Hale v. New Orleans*, 13 La. An. 499; *Norton v. Jackson*, 5 Cal. 262; *Hannah v. Henderson*, 4 Ind. 174; *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 124.

⁴ *Bailey v. Miltenberger*, 31 Penn. St. 37, 41; *Ellis v. Welch*, 6 Mass. 246.

⁵ *Stanley v. Hayes*, 3 Q. B. 105.

covenant.¹ Thus in *Sprague v. Baker*,² the tenant yielded to the claim of a prior mortgagee without suit. [*665] *In *White v. Whitney*, the only ouster was by the mortgagee's making an entry upon the premises.³ So in *Tufts v. Adams*.⁴

25. The covenant of warranty thus far discussed, has been the general covenant against the lawful adverse claims of all persons. But this covenant may be, and often is, limited and restricted to certain persons, or to certain claims. Thus, it is very common to insert in American deeds of quitclaim, a covenant against all persons claiming by, through, or under the grantor. In this case the covenant does not stand in the way of the grantor's claiming the land against his own covenantee, under and by virtue of a title acquired after the making of his own deed.⁵

26. So the extent of the covenant of warranty is often limited and defined by the subject-matter of the grant, as where the deed only purports to convey the right, title, and interest of the grantor.⁶ The court of Iowa, recognizing the doctrine as here stated, makes a distinction between a grant of a specific parcel of land, and a recital that the grantor thereby intends to convey the grantor's right, title, and interest, and this is followed with a general covenant of warranty, and a grant of his right, title, and interest only. In the first, his covenant would

¹ *Hamilton v. Cutts*, 4 Mass. 349, 352; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 240, 247, and note of Am. cases; *Clarke v. M'Anulty*, 3 S. & R. 364, 372; *Peck v. Hensley*, 20 Tex. 673; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 65, 86; *Loomis v. Bedel*, 11 N. H. 74; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 297.

² *Sprague v. Baker*, 17 Mass. 586. See this limited, *Gilman v. Haven*, 11 Cush. 330.

³ *White v. Whitney*, 3 Met. 81, 89.

⁴ *Tufts v. Adams*, 8 Pick. 547; *Estabrook v. Smith*, 6 Gray, 572.

⁵ *Comstock v. Smith*, 13 Pick. 116; *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 46; *Trull v. Eastman*, 3 Met. 124; *Allen v. Sayward*, 5 Me. 227. The covenant in *Kimball v. Blaisdell*, 5 N. H. 533, though in substance like the above, was held to be equivalent to a general warranty, so far as to estop the grantor, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the case.

⁶ *Blanchard v. Brooks*, 12 Pick. 47, 67; *Raymond v. Raymond*, 10 Cush. 132, 140; *Sweet v. Brown*, 12 Met. 175; *Allen v. Holton*, 20 Pick. 458; *Hall v. Chaffee*, 14 N. H. 215, 226; *Gee v. Moore*, 14 Cal. 474; *Kimball v. Temple*, 25 Cal. 453; *White v. Brokaw*, 14 Ohio St. 344; *Wight v. Shaw*, 5 Cush. 56; *Brown v. Jackson*, 3 Wheat. 452; *Adams v. Ross*, 1 Vroom, 510.

extend to the title of the land, and bind him if it should fail. In the other, it is limited to the subject-matter of the grant, viz. to just what interest the grantor had in the premises.¹ So it is held in Minnesota.² In the case of *Blanchard v. Brooks*, the grant was of "all the right, title, interest, and estate," &c. The warranty was a general one against all persons, except those claiming under a certain mortgage. The court held that this was only a warranty "of the premises, that is, of the estate granted, which was all his right, title, and interest." The cases cited below seem to hold, without qualification, that the thing warranted in such a deed is the land itself, and not simply the right and title of the grantor.³ And the case cited by the court, of *Brown v. Jackson*, holds this language: "A conveyance of the right, title, and interest in land, is certainly sufficient to pass the land itself, if the party conveying has any estate therein at the time of the conveyance."⁴ Nor is it easy to see what the office or purpose of a covenant of warranty can be, when whatever is granted infallibly passes, and can never be lawfully divested by any future lawful act or right of any one. The grantor cannot reclaim or disturb what he has expressly granted; nor could any one acquire any right to disturb his grantee by any deed which the grantor might subsequently make.

27. In *Fowler v. Poling*, the judge, in giving the opinion, states, that there is a difference between an eviction under the covenant for quiet enjoyment, and one under that of warranty. The former relates only to the possession, and the eviction is merely required to be of lawful right, while the latter relates to the title, and the eviction must be not only by lawful right, but by paramount title, and suggests that this may account for an apparent discrepancy in the authorities upon the subject.⁵ But so far as there is a difference in this respect, it is intended to confine what is here said to warranty proper, as before explained. *Thus it has been held a con- [*666]

¹ *McNear v. McComber*, 18 Iowa, 14.

² *Hope v. Stone*, 10 Min. 152.

³ *Mills v. Catlin*, 22 Verm. 104; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 66; *Loomis v. Bedel*, 11 N. H. 74; *Rowe v. Heath*, 23 Tex. 614. See also *Hubbard v. Apthorp*, 3 Cush. 419.

⁴ *Brown v. Jackson*, 3 Wheat. 449.

⁵ *Fowler v. Poling*, 6 Barb. 165, 170. See also *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 221, 222.

structive eviction, where one made a mortgage with covenants of warranty, and then conveyed the same estate absolutely, without notice of the mortgage, to a purchaser who got his deed on record before the mortgage, and thereby defeated the same, and that the mortgagee might maintain an action upon the covenant in his deed, and rely upon those facts as tantamount to an eviction.¹

28. But the mere existence of a superior title in another, which has never been enforced, cannot amount to a breach of this covenant. The tenant must be disturbed, — he must be evicted, but he need not be evicted by legal process; it is enough that he has yielded possession to the rightful owner, or, the premises being vacant, that the rightful owner has taken possession.² In New Jersey, it is said that there must be an ouster by means of the prosecution and operation of legal measures.³ But the case seems to leave it doubtful whether it is necessary that these proceedings should be under a judgment of court.

29. As a general proposition, it is necessary, in order to a recovery upon a breach of a covenant of warranty, that the tenant claiming under the grant should have been evicted by an elder and better title than that which he derives from his warrantor. But in the case already cited,⁴ an eviction under a deed made by the warrantor after the deed in which he had covenanted to warrant the land, was held to be a breach of such covenant. This is regarded by Mr. Rawle, as a breach of the covenant for quiet enjoyment, which extends to all acts of the covenantor himself, whether tortious or otherwise.⁵

30. There is a covenant for further assurance, usually inserted in English deeds, but rarely in those in use in this

¹ *Curtis v. Deering*, 12 Me. 499, 501; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 66.

² *St. John v. Palmer*, 5 Hill, 599; *Fowler v. Poling*, 6 Barb. 165, 171; *Hamilton v. Cutts*, 4 Mass. 349; *Beebe v. Swartwout*, 3 Gilm. 162, 179. Though he cannot recover on the ground that he was himself in possession when the deed to him was made, *Id.*; *Estabrook v. Smith*, 6 Gray, 572; *Peck v. Hensley*, 20 Texas, 673; *Stipe v. Stipe*, 2 Head, 169; *Bostwick v. Williams*, 36 Ill. 69.

³ *Stewart v. Drake*, 4 Halst. 139, 141.

⁴ *Curtis v. Deering*, 12 Me. 499; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 66.

⁵ *Rawle*, Cov. 3d ed. 167. In an early case in Massachusetts, the deed of a grantee having been accidentally burned before record, his grantor conveyed the same to a second purchaser, whereby the first lost his estate. Wishing to recover the purchase-money which he had paid for the estate, the court held that once and

country, "which is resorted to, when inserted, rather [*667] as a means of enforcing a specific performance of the grantor's agreement to make a good title, than as the ground of a suit at law, for its breach."¹

31. A covenant of warranty in a deed of grant often operates to create a title by estoppel in the covenantee, although the covenantor, when making it, had no estate in the granted premises.² In such case, if the warrantor subsequently acquires a title to the premises, it enures, by way of estoppel, in favor of his covenantee. In the language of Field, C. J.: "He is not permitted to attack a title, the validity of which he has covenanted to maintain." A statute, moreover, in California, is to the same effect, and the principle applies to mortgages as well as absolute deeds.³ The effect of successive conveyances whether with or without warranty, may be illustrated by the following case. A, having possession but no title, conveyed lands to B, with a covenant for further assurance. B then quitclaimed to C, with a covenant to stand seised and for further assurance. A then acquired a title to the estate, and conveyed it by a warranty deed to B, which was duly recorded. B then conveyed the estate to J. S. granting all his right, title, estate, and interest in it, with covenants of warranty, and this was recorded. It was held that J. S. took the estate subject to the rights of C, and that he held it in trust for C, and this without any further notice being requisite than the grant itself being of the right, title, and interest only, of B.⁴ In commenting upon the effect of covenants of warranty in creating estates, the court of Illinois remark: "Whether the effect is produced by the way of estoppel, by remitter, or by the operation of the statute of uses, has been a matter of much discussion."⁵

not *assumpsit* for money had, &c. was the form of the action to be adopted. *Curtis v. Nightingale*, Quincy, 256.

¹ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 185; Platt, Cov. 353; Colby v. Osgood, 29 Barb. 339.

² Ante, *475.

³ *Clark v. Baker*, 14 Cal. 612, 630. See also as to effect of covenants of warranty on title by estoppel, ante, pp. *473 - *481; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. ch. 9; *Bates v. Norcross*, 17 Pick. 21; *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 353; *Baxter v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 260; *Cotton v. Ward*, 3 Mon. 394; *Reese v. Smith*, 12 Mo. 344; *Jones v. King*, 25 Ill. 388.

⁴ *Hope v. Stone*, 10 Minn. 141.

⁵ *D'Wolf v. Hayden*, 24 Ill. 525.

32. The effect of a covenant of warranty, by way of rebutter, is illustrated in the case of *Bates v. Norcross*,¹ already cited, in which the doctrine of lineal warranty, borrowed from the common law, is applied, although, as a general proposition, the ancient doctrine of lineal, as well as collateral warranty, is exploded in this country. The ground of the decision in such a case is, that, by holding the covenant of an ancestor, from whom assets have descended to his heir, to be a rebutter to the claim of the heir to land which the ancestor had wrongfully conveyed with warranty, a circuity of action is avoided, since, the moment the demandant were to recover the land, the tenant would acquire a right to recover the value thereof from the heir in an action upon the ancestor's covenant of warranty. In the case cited, the facts were, that Bates declared on his own seisin, claiming under Blodgett, who had the freehold of Shaw. The tenant claimed under a deed from Packard, to whom Davison had conveyed with covenants of seisin and warranty. Bates's wife was the daughter of Davison, and [*668] heir, he being dead, *to assets out of his estate. It was held that his, Davison's, warranty descended to her, and that, if Bates recovered the land, the tenant would at once have a claim for the value of the land thus taken from him, which he might recover from her and her husband, and to prevent circuity of action, the covenant of the ancestor was held to operate as a rebutter to the demandant's claim.²

33. What has been said, as well as the bearing of the doctrine upon the question of damages recoverable in an action upon a covenant of warranty, renders it proper to say a few words of "lineal and collateral warranties," which once filled so important a place in the English law of real property. The doctrine never was adopted, with all its effects, into American jurisprudence, and in England, after various statute modifications from time to time, it lost its most objectionable features, by the statute 4 Anne, ch. 16, and finally was altogether abolished by the statute of 3 & 4 Wm. IV. ch. 27 and 74. And the same has been done in New York.³ In Massachusetts it was

¹ *Bates v. Norcross*, 17 Pick. 144. See also *Cole v. Raymond*, 9 Gray, 217.

² Co. Lit. 365; *Potter v. Potter*, 1 R. I. 43.

³ *Lalor*, Real Est. 247; *Shelf. Real P. Stat.* 228.

once attempted, in 1765, to bar a cross remainder-man in tail by a collateral warranty. But the point was abandoned.¹ By the early common law the obligation of warranty, upon a feoffor and his heirs, growing out of tenure, resulted and was implied from the form of the gift itself, whereby the feoffee held of the feoffor and his heirs, and was bound to render services for the same; and they, in turn, were bound to warrant the lands, and to supply others of equal value if the title failed. When the statute of *quia emptores* destroyed this relation of tenure between feoffor and feoffee, though the feoffor was himself bound to warrant, it was a personal obligation and did not bind his heirs, unless he made an express warranty to that effect. Even before the statute last mentioned, it had become customary to insert such a clause in order to prevent the heir of a feoffor from claiming the land sold, and for this reason: The heir, at one period, was interested with the ancestor so far that the ancestor could not give a good title to lands, without the consent of his heir.² But if the ancestor did so grant and bind himself and his heirs *to warrant, the [*669] law presumed that he had received a full equivalent for the land which would go to his heir upon his death, and, therefore, held the heir bound by the warranty, by the way of rebutter, so that he could not disturb the grantee. As this heirship might be either by lineal descent from the warranting ancestor, or by collateral relationship, these kinds of warranty took the names of "lineal" and "collateral," according as the heir to be affected by it was lineally or collaterally related to the warrantor, although, in the latter case, the title of the heir to the particular estate affected by the warranty, could never have been derived from the warranting ancestor. The obligation of warranty, as has already been stated, was to give other lands of equal value, if the warrantee were evicted from those granted to him. But in neither lineal nor collateral warranty was the heir bound to do this, unless he received other sufficient lands, by descent, from the warranting ancestor. In the case, however, of lineal warranty, the heir was estopped from claiming the land himself, for the moment he had done so, successfully, he would be in possession of such assets

¹ *Banister v. Henderson*, Quincy, 119.

² See *Wild's case*, 6 Rep. 17.

wherewith to make good his ancestor's warranty.¹ The same thing was *assumed* to be true in case of a collateral warranty, but the injustice and absurdity of the doctrine can best be explained by applying it to a particular case.

The one put by Littleton is this: "If tenant in tail discontinue the tail, and hath issue and dieth, and the uncle of the issue release to the discontinuée *with warranty*, and dieth without issue, this is a collateral warranty to the issue in tail, because the warranty descendeth upon the issue that cannot convey, himself, to the entail by means of his uncle."² The circumstances to be regarded here, are, first, by reason of the tenant in tail having worked a discontinuance as to his issue by his conveyance before the birth of such issue, the heir in tail was driven to his action to regain possession of his land, upon the death of his ancestor, the tenant in tail; and it was in the trial of this action that this estoppel by warranty [*670] was raised. *That was done in this way, as explained by Lord Coke. The heir's relationship to his uncle was collateral, and he never could have derived any title to the land through him, for, being entailed, it could only descend in direct lineal descent. But the father being dead, upon the death of the uncle without issue, the nephew became, in theory, his heir at law, and if, therefore, he recovered from the tenant the land in question, he would, if he had received assets from his uncle, be obliged to make good the uncle's warranty to the tenant, in the same way as the heir of the warranting ancestor in a lineal warranty, would be bound to do. But as the same doctrine did not apply in the one case as in the other, that the very recovering of the lands would be assets, inasmuch as he was the heir to them through such ancestor, for he never could have inherited entailed lands through his uncle; the law *assumed* "that the uncle would not, unnaturally, disinherit his lawful heir, unless he should leave him greater advancement. *And in this case, the law will admit no proof against that which the law presumeth.*"³ And so he became barred by this *collateral* warranty. Other illustrations might be given, as a release by a younger brother, with warranty to the disseisor of the father, binding the older brother, and bar-

¹ Bl. Com. 300 - 302; Lalor, Real Est. 247. ² Litt. § 709. ³ Co. Lit. 373 a.

ring his claim to the land, if the younger brother died without issue, after the death of the father, leaving the older brother his heir by the rules of descent, though he died penniless.¹ But these will suffice to show the character of an arbitrary rule of law by which a beggar might cut off the rightful claim to land, by conveying or releasing it with warranty, merely because, by the accidental order in which two persons, to whom he was related, died, one became theoretically the heir at law of such warrantor.

34. This renders it necessary, too, to add a single word as to the doctrine of implied warranty, which has already been spoken of. So far as covenants are implied in leases, the reader is referred to a former part of this work,² and in respect *to the effect of the words "give" and "grant" in a [*671] deed implying, in England, a covenant in law, the late statute of 8 & 9 Vict., ch. 106, has declared that these words shall not receive that construction in deeds between individuals.³ The word "give" is one of the words from which, when used in a deed of feoffment, the law implies a covenant, and its extent is a covenant of warranty during the life of the grantor.⁴ But when used in a deed which derives its effect from the statute of uses, the expression does not imply a covenant.⁵ How far the word "grant" implies a covenant in a deed of conveyance, is considered by Mr. Platt, in his work on Covenants, and he states, unqualifiedly, that in conveyances of freehold estates the word "grant" will not constitute a warranty, though it does in case of an estate for years.⁶ The court in one case held that it seems now to be settled that, in conveying by deeds of bargain and sale, the words *granted*, *bargained*, *sold*, *enfeoffed*, and *confirmed*, have not the effect of covenants in law. But on the creation of a less estate than a freehold, a covenant of title is implied from the words of leasing. And the court, at the same time, hold that a purchaser who takes a conveyance of real es-

¹ Litt. § 707; 2 Bl. Com. 302.

² Ante, vol. 1, p. *324; Stearns, Real Act. 128.

³ Wms. Real Prop. 368.

⁴ Frost v. Raymond, 2 Caines, 188, 193; Kent v. Welch, 7 Johns. 258; Stearns, Real Act. 123-126.

⁵ Allen v. Sayward, 5 Me. 227; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 476.

⁶ Platt, Cov. 47, 48; Frost v. Raymond, 2 Caines, 188, 193; Co. Lit. 384 a, n. 322.

tate, must protect himself against a failure of title by appropriate covenants, or take the risk upon himself.¹ It is held by the courts of Missouri, that the words in a deed "bargain, sell, release, quitclaim, and convey" are words of release and quitclaim only. They do not raise the covenant which the statute implies from the words "grant, bargain, and sell." And even those words do not operate, like the ancient common-law warranty, to transmit a subsequently acquired title.² But where one granted a watercourse, it was held, that he thereby covenanted for its quiet enjoyment, so far as his own act was concerned.³ A reference to a street or way, as a boundary of land granted, though it might estop the grantor from denying the existence of, and a right to use, such street or way by the grantee, provided the grantor was the owner of the land so described as a street or way, would not amount to an implied covenant that it did, or would exist as such street or way,⁴ even if it be over the grantor's own land, if the way is not open as a way.⁵ But if one sell city lots for building, bounding them by streets laid down upon a map or plan, but not opened, the purchaser would acquire a legal right, as against the grantor, to have the streets opened to the width delineated on the map, and the land thus included in the street, will be dedicated by him to public use.⁶

35. There may be both express and implied covenants in a deed, and both be good.⁷ But an express covenant always supersedes or controls an implied one, when it relates to the same subject-matter of covenant.⁸ This can best be illustrated by a

¹ *Phillips v. Hudson*, 30 N. J. Law, 151; 2 Sugd. Vend. & Pur. 424.

² *Gibson v. Chouteau*, 39 Mo. 566; *Valle v. Clemens*, 18 Mo. 486.

³ *Pomfret v. Ricraft*, 1 Saund. 321, 322.

⁴ *Howe v. Alger*, 4 Allen, 206; *Bellinger v. Burial Ground, &c.* 10 Penn. St. 135; ante, p. *467. As to how far a party selling by a plan, showing a way upon it, is estopped to close it, or deny its existence, see *Rodgers v. Parker*, 9 Gray, 448; *Thomas v. Poole*, 7 Gray, 83; *Loring v. Otis*, 7 Gray, 563; *Bechtel v. Carslake*, 3 Stockt. Ch. 503; *Brainard v. B. & N. Y. Central Railroad*, 12 Gray, 410; ante, *635.

⁵ *Hopkinson v. McKnight*, 30 N. J. Law, 427; *Harding v. Wilson*, 2 B. & C. 96.

⁶ *Becker v. St. Charles*, 37 Mo. 18.

⁷ *Gates v. Caldwell*, 7 Mass. 68, 70.

⁸ *Kent v. Welch*, 7 Johns. 258; *Vanderkan v. Vanderkan*, 11 Johns. 122; 4 Cruise, Dig. 370; *Line v. Stephenson*, 5 Bing. n. c. 183.

few out of the many cases found in the books. Thus in one, the covenant was that the covenantee should have the estate "as his own right, &c. free from the claims of all persons whomsoever, to claim the same, or any part thereof lawfully." Then followed a clause binding the grantor, &c. to warrant and forever defend the right and title to the land, against all legal claims, in virtue of a certain patent. It was held, that the first was a general covenant of warranty, and that it was not limited or restricted by the special covenants. They both were to stand together.¹ So where the words in the deed were "grant, bargain, and sell," which are held, in Illinois, to constitute an express covenant, and these were followed by an express covenant that the heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, should defend the title against all persons, it was held not to limit the general express covenant which preceded it.² In Mississippi, however, where the same words are held to create an implied covenant, a grantor, after making use of these, added an express covenant to warrant and defend the premises against the claims of all persons. The covenantee sued his covenantor for a breach of covenant of seisin, on the ground that such covenant was implied in the words "grant, bargain, and sell." But the court held, that the express covenant of warranty did away the covenant implied by the words aforesaid, which were intended to operate as covenants only where the parties had omitted to insert covenants in their deed.³ In Missouri, the court sustain the above doctrine of the courts of Illinois and Pennsylvania, and add, "whilst it is conceded that a special covenant will restrain a general one, where the two are absolutely irreconcilable, yet the courts have inclined very much to let both stand." "Where the particular covenants and the general covenants are entirely independent of each other, and of a different character, they will all stand."⁴ So in Iowa, where the grantor's deed contained the words "grant, bargain, and sell," a covenant was added to warrant and defend the premises against all persons claiming under him. It was held, that the former

¹ *Rowe v. Heath*, 23 Texas, 614.

² *Hawk v. McCullough*, 21 Ill. 220, 222. See also *Funk v. Vonsida*, 11 S. & R. 109.

³ *Weems v. McCaughan*, 7 S. & M. 422.

⁴ *Alexander v. Schreiber*, 10 Mo. 460, 466.

words amounted to an express covenant, and that the latter covenant did not restrict their effect, though practically superfluous in its effect.¹ From the introduction of several covenants into the same deed, questions have arisen how far a restriction or limitation as to one of these on the part of the covenantor, extends to and affects the other covenants. The cases are somewhat numerous, and not easily reconciled. Thus, where a grantor covenanted, first, that notwithstanding any act by him to the contrary, he was seised in fee, and, second, that he had good right to convey &c., it was held that, though general in its terms, the limitation of the first extended to the second covenant. So where exceptions have been made in a covenant against incumbrances, of a certain mortgage, for instance, and this has been followed by a general covenant of warranty, the question has been made whether the exception as to the one extended to and limited the effect of the other. And this was the case of *Estabrook v. Smith*, cited below. The question in such cases can ordinarily be determined only by construing the several covenants in their relation to each other, in order to reach the meaning which the law gives to the language of the parties. The rule seems to be, that in order to have the restriction or limitation annexed to the first, affect the second in the like manner, the two covenants must be connected, they must be of the same import, and they must be directed to one and the same object, so that in the case stated of a qualified covenant as to incumbrances, with a general covenant of warranty, the latter was held not to be restricted or limited in its effect by the limitations of the first.² In carrying out their illustration, the court refer to the case of *Howell v. Richards*,³ where it is said: "The covenant for title, and the covenant for right to convey, are connected covenants, generally of the same import and effect, and directed to one and the same object, and the qualifying language of the one may, therefore, properly enough, be considered as virtually transferred to, and included in the other of them. But the covenant for quiet en-

¹ *Brown v. Tomlinson*, 2 *Greene* (Iowa), 525.

² *Estabrook v. Smith*, 6 *Gray*, 572, 577; 2 *Sugd. Vend.* 527, *et seq.*; *Sumner v. Williams*, 8 *Mass.* 162, 202, 214; *Browning v. Wright*, 2 *B. & P.* 13; *Howell v. Richards*, 11 *East*, 634; *Smith v. Compton*, 3 *B. & Ad.* 189.

³ *Howell v. Richards*, 11 *East*, 633. See *Gainsforth v. Griffith*, 1 *Saund.* 51.

joyment is of a materially different import, and directed to a distinct object." The court go on to say: "That he might, from motives of prudence, be unwilling to subject himself to a suit for the existence of an incumbrance, which he is willing to covenant shall never be suffered to disturb his grantee." In another case, the court lay it down as a general rule, that a general covenant will not be held to be qualified by others, unless in some way connected with them.¹ Thus, where the prior covenant in a deed was that the grantee should hold the premises free from the claims of all persons whomsoever, and was succeeded by one warranting the premises against all legal claims, "in virtue of said C's patent and deed to me," it was held, that the general warranty was not restricted by the limited terms of the second covenant.² But where a collector of taxes sold an estate as such, and covenanted, in his capacity of collector, to warrant and defend the granted premises, it was held that, as he followed the statute form of conveyance, his covenant was not to be regarded as personal, but made in his public capacity. Had he made the sale as executor or administrator, acting in *alieno jure*, any covenants he should have made would have bound him personally.³ So where the grantor first recited in his deed a declaration of good and full power to sell and dispose of the tract, followed by a covenant to warrant and defend, &c. "all our right, title, claim, &c. against the just claims of all persons," it was held to amount to general covenant of warranty.⁴ And in *Cornell v. Jackson*, where there were covenants of seisin, against incumbrances, and warranty, with a clause expressly limiting the covenants against incumbrances and warranty, to the land within certain points, it was held, that the covenant of seisin was not thereby limited or restricted to this portion of the premises.⁵

35 *a.* Of the nature of the foregoing inquiry, is the question which sometimes arises under a grant, where there is an outstanding charge like a mortgage upon the premises, and the

¹ *Smith v. Compton*, 3 B. & Ad. 189.

² *Rowe v. Heath*, 23 Texas, 614.

³ *Wilson v. Cochran*, 14 N. H. 399. See *Sumner v. Williams*, 8 Mass. 162.

⁴ *Peck v. Hensley*, 20 Texas, 673.

⁵ *Cornell v. Jackson*, 3 Cush. 506, 508; *Funk v. Voneida*, 11 S. & R. 109; *Alexander v. Schreiber*, 10 Mo. 460.

same are described as being under such charge or mortgage, whether the purchaser thereby assumes, in law or equity, a personal obligation to pay the same? The case is fully considered in *Stebbins v. Hall*, where it is held that, in order to charge such purchaser personally, the language of the deed should be "subject to the payment" of the outstanding mortgage, or that "it forms a part of the purchase-money which the grantee in the deed assumes to pay," or some equivalent expression, which clearly imports that an obligation is intended to be created by one party, and is knowingly assumed by the other."¹

36. But by statute in New York, no covenant is to be implied in any conveyance of real estate, whether such deed contains special covenants or not.² But this does not extend to implied covenants in leases, which are left as at common law.³ On the other hand, in several of the States, if one grant land by deed, without any express covenant therein, it is provided by statute that there is thereby an implied covenant on his part that he is seised, that they are free of incumbrances created by him, and, for quiet enjoyment, as against all acts done by the grantor.⁴ In Delaware, "grant," "bargain, and sell," unless specially restrained, imply a special warranty against a [*673] *grantor and his heirs and all persons claiming under him.⁵ In Indiana, a warranty of title must be inserted if intended.⁶ In Iowa, the words "grant, bargain, and

¹ *Stebbins v. Hall*, 29 Barb. 524; *Tillotson v. Boyd*, 4 Saund. 516; *Murray v. Smith*, 1 Duer, 412; *Trotter v. Hughes*, 2 Verm. 74; ante, vol. 1, p. *518, *571; *Gage v. Brewster*, 31 N. Y. 221; *Belmont v. Coman*, 22 N. Y. 438.

² 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat., 4th ed. p. 148, § 153. So in Minnesota, Comp. Stat. 1858, ch. 35, § 1; Oregon, Stat. 1855, p. 519, § 1; Wisconsin, Rev. Stat. 1858, ch. 86, § 5; Ohio, Walk. Am. Law, 381; North Carolina, *Ricketts v. Dickens*, 1 Murph. 343.

³ *Tone v. Brace*, 11 Paige, 566, 569; *Mayor, &c. v. Mabie*, 3 Kern. 160; *Vernam v. Smith*, 15 N. Y. 327, unless the leases are in fee or perpetuity. *Carter v. Barr*, 39 Barb. 59.

⁴ Mississippi, Code, 1857, p. 309, art. 16; California, Wood, Dig. 1858, pp. 100, 105; Arkansas, Dig. Stat. 1858, ch. 37, § 1; Pennsylvania, *Purd. Dig.* 1857, p. 229, § 65; Illinois, 2 Comp. Stat. 961; Alabama, Code, 1852, § 1314; Missouri, Rev. Stat. 1855, ch. 32, § 14; Kansas, Stat. 1855, chs. 14, 26; *Drexel v. Miller*, 49 Penn. St. 249.

⁵ Del. Code, 1852, ch. 83, § 2.

⁶ Ind. Rev. Stat. 1852, ch. 23, §§ 12, 15.

sell," in a deed are, by statute, construed to be express covenants: 1. Of seisin; 2. Against incumbrances done or suffered by the grantor, or those claiming under him; and 3. For further assurance. A similar provision was contained in Stat. 6 Anne, ch. 35, § 30, and is said to have been re-enacted in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Missouri.¹ But the ruling of the courts of the different States, as to the extent of the covenants implied from these words, do not seem to be uniform. Thus in *Gratz v. Ewalt*, the court held, that it was a covenant, "that the grantor had done no act nor created any incumbrance, whereby the estate granted by him might be defeated, that the estate was indefeasible as to any act of the grantor." Ch. Kent approves of this construction, and expresses an opinion that the same doctrine would apply to the same statutory language in other States, though the subject is now regulated in New York by statute, as already stated.² In Iowa, it was held to be, in effect, a covenant against incumbrances, and broken by an existing incumbrance, although no measures may have been taken by the incumbrancer to disturb the grantee in his possession.³ In Alabama, the same construction is applied to the covenant created by the words "grant, bargain, and sell," as that of the courts of Pennsylvania. And the same rule applies in Mississippi, and in Illinois.⁴ It was held, however, in Illinois, that as the words, "grant, bargain," &c. constituted a statute covenant, an after-acquired title would enure to the benefit of a grantee, in a deed containing these words, to the same extent as if there had been full covenants of warranty.⁵ But in Missouri, they are regarded as express covenants of seisin, against incumbrances, and of further assurance.⁶

36 a. Sometimes a certain number of acres or quantity of

¹ *Brown v. Tomlinson*, 2 Greene (Iowa), 527; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 62, 84; 4 Kent, Com. 474; *Gratz v. Ewalt*, 2 Binn. 95; *Funk v. Voneida*, 11 S. & R. 109; *Alexander v. Schreiber*, 10 Mo. 460.

² 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat., 4th ed. p. 148, § 153.

³ *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Iowa, 62, 95.

⁴ *Roebuck v. Dupuy*, 2 Ala. 538; *Latham v. Morgan*, 1 S. & M., Ch. 611; *Prettyman v. Wilkey*, 19 Ill. 249; *Hawk v. McCullough*, 21 Ill. 220.

⁵ *D'Wolf v. Haydn*, 24 Ill. 525; *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 353.

⁶ *Alexander v. Schreiber*, 10 Mo. 460.

land, in the granted premises, is intended to be guaranteed or assured to the grantee, and words to that effect have been held to amount to a covenant. The question in the numerous cases which have arisen, has been, whether the reference to quantity is a part of the description of what is intended to be granted, or intended as an assurance of the quantity mentioned. It may be stated, generally, that where the number of acres is referred to as an "estimated" quantity, or coupled with the clause of "more or less," or is clearly a matter of description, it is not a covenant.¹ So where the quantity is mentioned in addition to the boundaries in the description of the estate, the quantity yields to the boundaries if they do not coincide.² If, on the other hand, the quantity be "of the essence of the contract between the parties, the covenant is construed relatively to the quantity of land conveyed, and is to be deemed an assurance to the purchaser of the existence of that quantity."³ And a vendor would be liable for false representations as to the quantity or extent of the premises granted, if accompanied with damage, whether his deed contains covenants or not.⁴

37. Although the question as to what damages may be recovered for the breach of any of these covenants, may, perhaps, belong more properly to the subject of remedy than to that of title to real property, it cannot be out of place to say a few words upon the rules which different courts have considered applicable in deciding such questions. In Pennsylvania, a purchaser with warranty may retain from his purchase-money, if not yet paid, a sum adequate to the loss he may sustain by a breach of the covenant.⁵ While, in respect to some of these, the rule is substantially the same in all the courts, in respect to others, there is a great and irreconcilable diversity, which it will be sufficient to state, without an elaborate explanation of the grounds of difference.

¹ *Hall v. Mayhew*, 15 Md. 351; *Wright v. Wright*, 34 Ala. 194; *Beall v. Barkhalter*, 26 Ga. 564, 567; *Powell v. Clark*, 5 Mass. 355, is regarded as description only in absence of express covenant. See *Mann v. Pierson*, 2 Johns. 37; *Perkins v. Webster*, 2 N. H. 287.

² *Jackson v. Moore*, 6 Cow. 717.

³ *Beall v. Barkhalter*, *sup.*

⁴ *Whitney v. Allaire*, 1 Comst. 308. See *Dobell v. Stevens*, 3 B. & C. 633.

⁵ *Wilson v. Cochran*, 45 Penn. 230.

38. In the first place, where the covenant of seisin is broken, the measure, with few exceptions, is the purchase-money and interest; the consideration for which the purchase-money was paid, having failed, the damages never exceed this.¹ And damages are allowed *pro rata*, if the seisin fail as to a part of the granted premises.² An exception to this rule prevailed, where one, not seised, conveyed with covenants of seisin and warranty, and then acquired a title to the estate; for then, as *this* enured, by force of the covenant of warranty, to the benefit of the grantee, it was held, that he could no longer maintain an action to recover back the purchase-money.³ But if he had been evicted by the rightful owner, he could not have been compelled to accept the newly acquired title of his grantor, but might have sued for the purchase-money if he chose so to do.⁴ So where the grantee, under a deed with a covenant of seisin, enters and enjoys the estate, and from lapse of time has ceased to be liable for the profits at the suit of the real owner, it would seem that, in an action to recover back the purchase-money *and interest, he must allow for [*674] the profits so received by him.⁵ So where the covenant was that the grantor was seised of an indefeasible estate *in fee*, and there being an outstanding title, the covenantee sues for a breach, before he is interfered with by the true owner, on the ground of a breach because the character of the grantor's seisin was not such as answered the terms of the covenant, he will be entitled to recover only his actual damages. So, in another case, for a similar breach, nominal damages alone were recovered, because he had been permitted to occupy under his grant until his title had become complete by ad-

¹ Rawle, Cov. 3d ed. 58, and note for American cases; 4 Kent, Com. 475; *Staats v. Ten Eyck*, 3 Caines, 111; *Marston v. Hobbs*, 2 Mass. 433; *Sedgw. Dam.* 183; *Nutting v. Herbert*, 37 N. H. 346; *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. (Law) 39; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Iowa, 295; *Burton v. Reeds*, 20 Ind. 93. It is the sum actually paid and not the sum mentioned in the deed; *Bingham v. Weiderwax*, 1 Comst. 513; *Dayton v. Warren*, 10 Minn. 237; *Tucker v. Clarke*, 2 Sandf. Ch. 96.

² *Morris v. Phelps*, 5 Johns. 49, 55; *Beaupland v. McKeen*, 28 Penn. St. 124, 134; *Lee v. Dean*, 3 Whart. 331; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 89; *Cornell v. Jackson*, 3 Cosh. 510; *Partridge v. Hatch*, 18 N. H. 498.

³ *Baxter v. Bradbury*, 20 Me. 260; *King v. Gilson*, 32 Ill. 356.

⁴ *Blanchard v. Ellis*, 1 Gray, 195, 200; ante, p. *475.

⁵ *Whiting v. Dewey*, 15 Pick. 428, 435; *Catlin v. Hurlburt*, 3 Verm. 403, 409.

verse enjoyment.¹ In *Kincaid v. Brittain*, where the covenant of seisin was considered as a continuing one, the court discuss the question of damages for a breach thereof. "If untrue, it is broken the instant it is made, and an immediate right of action accrues to the purchaser to sue for the breach, and he is entitled to recover damages, the measure of which may be the consideration-money and interest, or a less amount, or mere nominal damages, according to the nature and extent of the breach in the particular case. If the failure of title be only as to part of the land, or if the purchaser has himself extinguished the paramount title, or if his actual possession be of such a character, and continued for such a length of time, as to make the title valid under the statute of limitations, or if, for other cause, the breach be merely a technical one, the purchaser will not be entitled to have the damages measured by the consideration-money and interest. Such is the proper measure of damages, only where there is an entire failure of title, or where the purchaser has the right to treat it as such; and in the latter case, the effect of a recovery of an equivalent in damages, would be to entitle the bargainor to a reconveyance."² In *Cornell v. Jackson*, the grantor was disseised of a part of the granted premises, so that no actual seisin passed to the grantee. The grantee, some years after, and before any seisin regained, conveyed the part in possession of the disseisor, to a third person, by release. The first grantee sued on the covenant of seisin in his deed and recovered. His grantor had, in the mean time, sued for and recovered seisin against the disseisor, so that the title to the part recovered enured by way of estoppel to his grantee, under the covenant of warranty in the original deed. It was held, that the plaintiff, in the action upon the covenant of seisin, was entitled to recover of the purchase-money and interest, *pro rata*, according to the value of the part of which the seisin failed, compared with the value of the whole premises, deducting the value of the part which had enured to him by estoppel.³ It may be added, that when

¹ *Garfield v. Williams*, 2 Verm. 327; *Wilson v. Forbes*, 2 Dev. 30, 35. See Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 74, and note; *Cotton v. Ward*, 3 Mon. 304; *Reese v. Smith*, 12 Mo. 344; *Morrison v. Underwood*, 20 N. H. 369.

² *Kincaid v. Brittain*, 5 Sneed, 123, 124; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Iowa, 294-296.

³ *Cornell v. Jackson*, 3 Cush. 506.

one recovers, under a covenant of seisin, the consideration paid and interest, it is the true amount thus paid, and not merely what is stated as the consideration in the deed.¹

39. As the covenant against incumbrances is one of indemnity, the covenantee can recover only nominal damages for a breach thereof, unless he can show that he has sustained actual loss or injury thereby, or has had to pay money to remove the incumbrance.² Thus, if the incumbrance be of a permanent character, such as a right of way or other easement which impairs the value of the premises, and cannot be removed by the purchaser, as a matter of right, the damages will be measured by the diminished value of the premises thereby occasioned, to be determined by a jury.³ So if it consist of an outstanding mortgage which the covenantee has paid and discharged, he will be entitled to recover the amount so paid, and interest, provided it is less than the value of the land.⁴ But until he shall have removed such incumbrance, the grantee can only recover nominal damages, for the obvious reason, that if another person is liable for the mortgage debt, the holder of the mortgage may never avail himself of his mortgage lien upon the land, or disturb the purchaser in the enjoyment of the premises.⁵ And if the incumbrance be an attachment upon the land, which is *afterwards enforced by levy upon it, the [*675] measure of damages will be the amount for which the same was so levied upon, and by which the judgment was satisfied; for the purchaser, in such a case, has actually been dispossessed, and must pay that sum to regain his possession and estate.⁶ If the incumbrance is of a kind which admits of being removed, and the purchaser shall have extinguished it, he may recover upon his covenant what he may have fairly and reasonably paid for such extinguishment.⁷ So he may recover

¹ *Bingham v. Weiderwax*, 1 Comst. 514; *Sedgw. Damages*, 3d ed. 172.

² *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 134; *Morrison v. Underwood*, 20 N. H. 369; *Funk v. Creswell*, 5 Clarke (Iowa), 62.

³ *Harlow v. Thomas*, 15 Pick. 66; *Batchelder v. Sturgis*, 3 Cush. 201, 206.

⁴ *Prescott v. Trueman*, 4 Mass. 627; *Norton v. Babcock*, 2 Met. 510, 516; *Estabrook v. Smith*, 6 Gray, 572.

⁵ *Wyman v. Ballard*, 12 Mass. 304; *Tufts v. Adams*, 8 Pick. 547; *Funk v. Voneida*, 11 S. & R. 112.

⁶ *Barrett v. Porter*, 14 Mass. 142; *Wyman v. Bridgen*, 4 Mass. 150.

⁷ *Rawle, Cov.*, 3d ed. 138, and note of American cases; *Morrison v. Underwood*,

whatever actual damage he may have sustained by the incumbrance, although the covenantor may have removed it before action brought.¹ But it seems that the purchaser is not bound to redeem, and if the incumbrance, by a failure to redeem, grows into an absolute estate, and the purchaser thereby loses his title altogether, he may recover, in damages, the purchase-money and interest.²

40. The following principle, applicable as well to an action upon a covenant of seisin as to that against incumbrances and of warranty, seems now to be settled. If such covenantee recover and receive of the covenantor full satisfaction in damages for the value of the premises, equal to the purchase-money and interest, his covenantor and grantor is thereby remitted to his right and title to the granted premises as he held them before he had granted them away, and the covenantee would be estopped, by such a judgment, to set up his title deed against his grantor.³

41. In the matter of the rule of damages for the breach of the two covenants thus far considered, there does not appear to be, substantially, any difference between the several American courts. But in respect to the covenant of warranty or for quiet enjoyment, there would be found differences of a most decided character. This depends upon the theory which they adopt in applying the law. In some of the States, the covenant of warranty is assumed to take the place of the ancient warranty of the feudal law; and by that, if the vassal was [*676] evicted of his *lands by a better paramount title, he received from his lord other lands, as a substitute, of the *same value as those he had lost, computed as at the time of the warranty*. As the thing recovered now is money, instead of land, the same idea is carried out, by giving to the party who has lost his land, the money he paid for it, and interest, so as to re-

20 N. H. 369; Funk v. Creswell, 5 Iowa, 62, 64; Funk v. Vonoida, 11 S. & R. 112, 114, 117.

¹ Wetherbee v. Bennett, 2 Allen, 429.

² Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 148; Blanchard v. Ellis, 1 Gray, 195, 203; Chapel v. Bull, 17 Mass. 213.

³ Porter v. Hill, 9 Mass. 34, 36; Stinson v. Sumner, Id. 147, 150; Blanchard v. Ellis, 1 Gray, 195, 203; Parker v. Brown, 15 N. H. 176, 188; Kincaid v. Brittain, 5 Sneed, 124.

store him to his original condition in that respect.¹ In other States, the covenant is regarded as one of indemnity, and the rule of damages is to restore to the covenantee what he shall have lost by the failure of the other party to keep his covenants. And, therefore, the measure of damages is the value of the premises at the time of the eviction. This, of course, covers improvements made by the occupant, and the increased value of the premises arising from the general rise of property, or any other circumstance.

42. It is hardly necessary to say that, in a country where the value of lands is changing so rapidly from a great variety of causes, it is a question of great moment to the respective parties, whether the one or the other of these rules is to prevail. Mr. Rawle has collected the cases in the different States, bearing upon this point,² from which it appears, that the value of the land at the time of eviction is adopted as the measure of damages in Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, South Carolina, and Massachusetts. The States which adopt the value of the lands at the time of conveyance, as the measure of damages, are New Jersey, Virginia, Tennessee, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Indiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, and the courts of the United States. By the value of the estate, at the one time or the other, as the measure of the damages, will be understood the limit to which the law allows the party to recover, while there are often circumstances, which it is not proposed here to stop to explain, which would reduce this amount, in certain cases, below that limit. And it may be added, that if a covenantee, against whom an action is brought by one claiming the land, to recover the same, defend against the suit in good faith, and is evicted by a judgment, he will be entitled to recover of his covenantor the costs of such suit, and, as held by some courts, the fees he may have had to pay for counsel. But, in Massachusetts, this last item is not allowed.³ It may be added, that the

¹ Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 313; *Brandt v. Foster*, 5 Iowa, 298.

² Rawle, Cov. 314-321; *Nunnally v. White*, 3 Met. (Ky.) 592; *Burton v. Reeds*, 20 Ind. 93; *Gore v. Brazier*, 3 Mass. 523.

³ *Rowe v. Heath*, 23 Texas, 614; *Morris v. Rowan*, 2 Harrison, 306; Rawle, Cov., 3d ed. 99-104; *Leffingwell v. Elliott*, 10 Pick. 204.

rule adopted by the majority of the States, as above explained, is the one in force by the English common law.¹ There [*677] are other *topics connected with the nature and character of deeds, which it would be proper to consider in this connection, if it were proposed to discuss the whole subject, such as how deeds may be avoided, either by the parties or creditors, and how they are to be construed, and the like. But to do this would extend this work altogether beyond its proposed limits, and the reader must be referred for these to treatises upon deeds and conveyancing, which are easily accessible to any one desirous of pursuing the investigation.

¹ *Lewis v. Campbell*, 8 Taunt. 715.

CHAPTER VI.

TITLE BY DEVISE.

1. History of devises of land in England.
2. Statute of wills, 32 and 34 Henry VIII.
3. No witnesses necessary under statute of wills.
4. Wills ambulatory till testator's death.
5. Witnesses to wills, to testify of testator's capacity.
6. Witnesses must subscribe in testator's presence.
7. Witnesses must be competent when attesting.
8. Forms of wills of land governed by *lex rei sitæ*.
9. How many witnesses to a will required.
10. Effect of Probate of a will on title to land.
- 11, 12. At what point of time wills speak.
13. Qualifications of testator as to capacity.
14. Wills of *femes covert*.
15. What constitutes a "sound and disposing mind."
16. Who may be devisees.
17. Of devises to charitable uses by 43 Elizabeth.
18. How far such devises good before the statute of Elizabeth.
19. What may be devised as real estate.
20. Devisee may take advantage of condition broken.
21. To whom lapsed devises go.
- 21 a. Lapse as to one does not defeat a second devise.
22. Of devise of right of entry by a devisee.
23. Intention of testator affects the quantity of estate devised.
- 23 a. Of changing words in construing devises.
24. What terms in a devise pass a fee.
25. A personal charge creates a fee in land devised.
26. Devise of wild land conveys a fee.
27. When a devise in trust passes a fee.
28. Cases where fees are created by implication.
29. An absolute right of disposal implies a fee.
30. Devise of rents and profits same as of land itself.
31. Interest of devisee vests on death of testator.
 - a. Of devises to beneficiaries not named.
32. How devises may be defeated.
- 33, 34. Revocation of a will by change of estate. [•679]
35. Conveyance of land revokes a devise of it.
36. Effect of marriage on will of a *feme sole*.

- 37, 38. Effect of marriage and birth of child on a will made.
- 39. Effect of omitting to name children in a will.
- 40. Of the revocation of a prior will by a new one.
- 41. Of devise to an heir of what would descend to him.
- 42. How a will once revoked may be revived.
- 43. No devise takes effect against assent of devisee.

1. It remains to speak of title by Devise, though necessarily in brief terms. The necessity of anything beyond a general outline of what is requisite to constitute a good devise, and the rules of construction which are applied in giving it effect, is obviated by extended treatises upon the subject, which are readily accessible to the reader, especially the work of Mr. Jarman, with the full and discriminating notes of the American editor, Mr. Perkins, and that of Judge Redfield, which supply all that can be reasonably desired by any one who may have occasion to pursue the inquiry. In tracing the history of devises, from their first introduction into England, it is ascertained that wills of land were in use among the Saxons. But, upon the introduction of the feudal system by William I., A. D. 1060, they were abrogated, for various reasons. In the first place, livery of seisin, the ordinary *indicium* of title and ownership, could not be adopted, since a will never took effect until the death of the testator. In the next place, a free disposition of a feud by the last will of the tenant thereof, might bring in an enemy of the lord to fight his battles and do his services. This continued to be the law, except in particular localities, until the general statute of wills passed in the 32 and 34 Henry VIII., A. D. 1541. The custom of disposing of lands by means of last wills and testaments had, however, become very general, not by law, but rather against it, by means of uses, whereby the principle of the feudal law was evaded. This, as has been before explained when treating of uses, was effected, among other ways, by conveying lands to such uses as the feoffor should declare by his last will, in which case the legal estate passed by the feoffment, while chancery enforced the use which the feoffor might [*680] declare, in the form *pointed out by him, when making the feoffment. When, by the statute of 27 Henry VIII. called the statute of uses, the seisin was at once united to the

[784]

use in the transfer of estates, its effect was to destroy the power of devising lands by the way of uses, and they, accordingly, became undevisable and remained so until the statute of wills above mentioned, of the 32 and 34 Henry VIII.¹

2. The act of 32 Henry VIII. ch. 1, authorizes any person holding lands by socage tenure, "to give, dispose, will, and devise, as well by his *last will and testament in writing*, or otherwise by any other act or acts lawfully executed in his life, all his lands at his free will and pleasure. The statute 34 and 35 Henry VIII. ch. 5, is explanatory of the first, and, by the fourteenth section, expressly declares "women covert," persons within the age of twenty-one years, idiots and persons *de non sane* memory, incompetent to make a will.

This, it will be perceived, was about two hundred and fifty years after lands had become freely alienable by deed by virtue of the statute of *Quia Emptores*, 18 Edward I. It will also be perceived, that the statute requires the will to be in writing, but it does not say by whom it is to be written, nor does it require the writing to be signed by the testator or attested by witnesses. This led to such loose and often corrupt practices in palming off wills written by other persons as those of the supposed testators, after their deaths, that the subject was provided for in the famous statute of frauds, of 29 Charles II. ch.

3. In one case the will was written down from statements of witnesses, and before the writing was completed, the testator had become insensible, and so remained till he died, and yet the will was sustained, though, in respect to some of its clauses, the witnesses did not agree as to what the testator did declare.² The case, which is said to have been the cause of inserting the clause as to wills in the statute of frauds, was *Stephens v. Gerrard*,³ *where the testator dictated a will and [*681] caused it to be interlined, and it was prepared to be signed and sealed by him, and he said he intended to write it over again, but that in the mean time it should be his will, though he refused to sign it. The testator dying, it was established as a will.

¹ Wright, Ten. 171-173; Wild's case, 6 Rep. 16 b; 4 Kent, Com. 504; 6 Cruise, Dig. 3-5.

² Lawrence v. Kete, Aleyn, 54.

³ Stephens v. Gerrard, 2 Keble, 128; Roberts, Frauds, 307.

3. By that statute, a will devising lands was required to be in writing, signed by the party making the devise, or by some person in his presence and by his direction, and attested and subscribed in his presence by three or four credible witnesses. By a recent statute in England, a will devising lands there, must be signed at the bottom of the will by the testator, or some one by his direction and in his presence, and be attested by at least two witnesses, who must subscribe it in the testator's presence.¹ No particular form is required to make a testamentary writing. If the instrument vest no present interest, but only appoints what is to be done after the death of the maker, it is a testament. Nor does it make any difference that the parties intended it to be a deed. The instrument, in the case under consideration, was an indenture between a father and son purporting to convey an estate, but held to be a testamentary paper or will.² The requirement of *signing* by the testator, is held to be complied with by the testator's *making his mark*, even in New York, where the statute uses the word *subscribed*.³ Two cannot join in making a will of their separate property to a third person, and where a husband and wife joined in executing a will of their separate property, it was not admitted as either the will of each or of both.⁴ But wills mutually made by two testators in favor of each other may be good so far, that upon the death of one, his will will take effect and the other be defeated. So two may join in making a will of the property of one of them, since, so far as one of the makers is concerned, it is without effect.⁵ A will made on Sunday is valid.⁶

4. The same disposition which favored devises of lands in England, was introduced into this country at its settlement, and the system has always been in operation here. The formalities required in executing such wills, vary according to the

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 168; Stat. 7 Wm. IV. and 1 Vict. ch. 26.

² Turner v. Scott, 51 Penn. St. 126; Burlington University v. Barrett (Iowa), 1 West. Jurist, 198; Wall v. Wall, 30 Miss. 91.

³ Van Hanswyck v. Wiese, 44 Barb. 494.

⁴ Walker v. Walker, 14 Ohio St. 157.

⁵ Ib.; Lewis v. Scofield, 26 Conn. 452; Evans v. Smith, 28 Ga. 98; Roger's Appeal, 11 Me. 303.

⁶ Bennett v. Brooks, 9 Allen, 118; George v. George (N. H.), 16 Am. L. Reg. 319.

statute provisions of the several States, though these will be found to be substantially the same in every State.

But before examining these provisions in detail, there are a few general principles which may be noticed, as applicable in all the States, as well as the English law. And, in the first place, a will is always ambulatory, as it is called, always inchoate, and may, at any time, be altered or destroyed by the testator during his life. It is only operative and effectual at and after his death.¹

5. The witnesses to a will are, in the theory of the law, placed around the testator when executing it, as judges of his capacity to make it, and when called upon to testify in respect to this capacity, they are, unlike all other witnesses who do not come within the class of "experts," at liberty to express an opinion upon the subject, which is to be taken as competent, though not conclusive evidence, by the court or jury.² It is *not necessary for the witness to see the testator sign, [*682] if he requests the witness to attest it, and he does so in the testator's presence.³ But it does not matter upon what part of the instrument the witnesses subscribe their names, nor need they sign in each other's presence; if done in that of the testator, it is sufficient. And it may be by mark, instead of writing the name.⁴ It will be sufficient if there are three genuine names attested to the will, although neither of them recollect the act of signing their names.⁵ But it is essential that the attestation should be made *after* the testator has signed the will. It will not be sufficient that the witness subscribes his name first, though the testator know and intend to adopt his signature as an attestation.⁶

6. The witnesses must subscribe their names, attesting the will in the presence of the testator. What shall be a "presence," depends somewhat on circumstances. But it seems to be necessary, first, that the witnesses, when subscribing, should be in such a situation that the testator could see the act done,

¹ Vynior's case, 8 Rep. 82 a; 2 Bl. Com. 502; 4 Kent, Com. 520.

² 1 Greenl. Ev. § 440.

³ Tilden v. Tilden, 13 Gray, 103, 110; Nickerson v. Buck, 12 Cush. 332, 341.

⁴ Redfield, Wills, 229, 231, 233.

⁵ Eliot v. Eliot, 10 Allen, 357.

⁶ Chase v. Kittredge, 11 Allen, 49. But see Vaughan v. Vaughan, &c. Redfield's note, 13 Am. L. Reg. 735, 741.

and know whether the paper which they attested was his will. And second, the attestation must be made while the testator is in a conscious state. If subscribed in his bodily presence, while he is insensible, it is a void attestation.¹ But a mark made by the testator in place of his name, if intended as a signature, will be a good execution of a will.²

7. In the next place, the witnesses must be competent to testify, at the time of attestation. In some States they are required to be *credible*, in others, *competent*. But the meaning of the terms is the same.³ One named as executor in a will is a competent witness.⁴ And so is an heir at law who is disinherited by the will.⁵

8. The law of the place where the land is situate, governs in the matter of the forms and solemnities requisite to give effect to a will designed to operate upon the same, though, in a majority of the States, as is the case in Massachusetts, a will made according to the forms of the other State where the testator dwells, may be admitted to probate in the State where the land is situate.⁶

9. The number of attesting witnesses required to give validity to a will of lands, is, in fourteen of the States, at least three. In seventeen of the States, two witnesses are [*683] sufficient. *The laws of Louisiana on the subject are peculiar. In Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia, an exception is made in respect to requiring attesting witnesses where the will is what is called an *olograph*, wholly written and signed by the testator himself. The States requiring three witnesses, as stated by Mr. Thornton, and as will be found by reference to the statutes of the States, are Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Caro-

¹ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 678.

² *Nicherson v. Beck*, 12 Cash. 332, 341.

³ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 681; *Hawes v. Humphrey*, 9 Pick. 350; *Haven v. Hilliard*, 23 Pick. 10. See also the cases *Wickham v. Chetwynd*, 1 Burr. 414, and *Hindson v. Kersey*, 4 Barns. Ecol. Law, Phil. ed. 116, for the celebrated conflict of opinion between Lord Mansfield and Lord Camden, upon the point of time in respect to which this competency relates, whether the making or the probate of the will. *Warren v. Baxter*, 45 Me. 192.

⁴ *Wyman v. Symmes*, 10 Allen, 152.

⁵ *Sparhawk v. Sparhawk*, 10 Allen, 185.

⁶ *Story, Conf. Laws*, § 474; *Mass. Gen. Stat.* ch. 32, § 8; *United States v. Crosby*, 7 Cranch, 115; *Thornt. Contr.*

lina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Those requiring two, are Alabama, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. In Vermont and New Hampshire, a seal is required to give validity to a will. But though very frequently adopted by testators in other States, it is not, it would seem, necessary in any other State to the validity of a will. In Pennsylvania, it seems, while it is necessary to prove a will by at least two witnesses, it is not requisite that they should have attested and subscribed the same in the testator's presence. Besides these general requirements, there are more or less stringent rules adopted in most of the States, in respect to the presence of the witnesses at the execution of the will, as to how far they must see the testator sign, in order to attest its execution, and how far the testator, when executing it, must make an express declaration or publication that it is his will, &c., which it is not deemed important to detail in a work which does not profess to treat of the practical forms of conveyancing. To obviate the incompetency of a legatee or devisee to be a witness to a will, it is declared, in most of the States, that such legacy or devise shall be void.¹

10. In respect to the effect of admitting a will to proof, a different rule prevails in most, if not all the States, from that in England. In the latter, wills of the personalty are filed and admitted to proof in the proper probate court, and when so proved become valid to all intents, and are received as such *in the trial of all collateral questions depending [*684] upon their validity. But there being no provision for the probate of wills of real estate, it is necessary to establish their execution by proof whenever any question arises in courts involving the inquiry. Whereas in this country, provision is made in the several States for establishing a will by a general probate thereof, when it becomes, like a judgment of court, conclusive evidence of its own due execution in the trial of any matter involving such an inquiry in any other court.²

¹ 4 Kent, Com. 508. North Carolina and Tennessee are exceptions. *Gass v. Gass*, 3 Humph. 278; N. H. Rev. Stat. ch. 156, § 6.

² 1 Greenl. Ev. § 518.

11. Though wills speak, as it is called, at the death of the testator, and have no operation until then, it often becomes necessary to inquire when they were made, in order to determine questions involving their validity and effect, as, for instance, whether at that time the testator was of competent age, of sane mind, and the like, and also, whether the will operated upon property of which the testator may be in possession at his death. Thus, while at common law a will operated upon whatever personal property the testator might have at the time of his death, such was not the case with his real property, of which only so much passed by the will as the testator was seised of at the time of making his will, and continued to be seised of, at the time of his death. After-acquired real property did not pass by such will, even if acquired by an exchange for what he did then own. And if the testator should have sold a parcel of the land which he held at the time of making his will, and afterwards re-purchased the same, it would come within his after-acquired property.¹ So, if he had changed his interest as mortgagee into an absolute ownership by foreclosure.²

12. But now, by the present English law upon the subject, a will speaks as if made at the testator's death, and whatever he may then have which is within the terms of the will and is intended to be devised, passes thereby. And such is substantially the law in several of the United States by statute, namely, [*685] New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Illinois.³ There is, besides, a class of cases where though the devise takes effect at the death of the testator, it may be partially postponed as to its complete effect, as where it is to a class of individuals, such as the children of A. If there be no particular or intermediate estate interposed between the death of the testator, and the coming into possession by the devisees, only such of A's children as shall have been born at the

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 172; 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 43; 4 Kent, Com. 510.

² Brigham v. Winchester, 1 Met. 390; Ballard v. Carter, 5 Pick. 112.

³ Wms. Real Prop. 173; 4 Kent, Com. 512; Mass. Gen. Stat., ch. 92, § 4; Me. Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 74, § 5; Conn. Gen. Stat., p. 401, § 1; N. H. Gen. Stat., ch. 174, § 2; Verm. Rev. Stat., p. 254; No. Car. Rev. Stat., p. 607, § 5; Willis v. Watson, 4 Scam. 64; 1 Jarm., Perk. ed. 85, 86, note; McNaughton v. McNaughton, 41 Barb. 50.

testator's death can take, excluding after-born children. But if there be a particular estate interposed, as to A for life, and then to the children of A, it will include all who shall have been born during the life of A, vesting in such as were born before the testator's death, and opening to let in such as are born afterwards, or, if all are dead except one, without leaving issue, the survivor takes the whole. So if for any cause one only can take, such would be the law as to time.¹

13. The general qualifications of a testator or testatrix for making a good will, are age, mental capacity, and freedom from legal disability. The statute of wills excludes persons from making wills who are infants, *femes covert*, idiots, and persons of non-sane memory. The law, in requiring a testator, if a male, to be of the age of twenty-one years, in order to be competent to make a valid will of real estate, is believed to be uniform in nearly all the States. But in several, females of the age of eighteen years are made competent to devise lands. Such is the case in Maryland, Mississippi, Illinois, and California, and by statute of the latter State, the same rule as to age applies to males.²

14. The capacity of *femes covert* to make wills, is derived from statute. Among the States where the common law, in this respect, is altered, are Ohio,³ Massachusetts,⁴ Arkansas,⁵ California,⁶ Missouri,⁷ Kentucky,⁸ Connecticut,⁹ Wisconsin,¹⁰

¹ 1 Jarm., Perk. ed. 296, 297; 2d do. 55, 56; Redfield, Wills, 386; Handberry v. Doolittle, 38 Ill. 202; Campbell v. Rawdon, 18 N. Y. 415; Downing v. Marshall, 23 N. Y. 374, 375.

² Maryland, Code, vol. 1, p. 685; Mississippi, How. & H. Comp. Stat. 385; Illinois Stat., ed. 1858, p. 479; Cal. Stat. 1850-1853, p. 140, § 1.

³ May devise lands held in her own right. Allen v. Little, 5 Ohio, 65; Swan, Stat. 1024, § 1.

⁴ Gen. Stat., ch. 108, § 9, may make a will of her real estate like a *feme sole*.

⁵ Dig. Stat., p. 1073, § 3, limited to such power as is secured by marriage settlement on, or authority in writing from her husband before marriage.

⁶ Stat. 1850-1853, p. 140, § 2, may make a will, if her husband consent in writing.

⁷ Gen. Stat. 1866, ch. 115, the same power as in Arkansas.

⁸ Rev. Stat., p. 694, may dispose, by will, of property secured to her separate use.

⁹ Gen. Stat. 1866, ch. 401, in the same manner as any person

¹⁰ Rev. Stat., p. 577, same power as in California.

Rhode Island,¹ Alabama,² Illinois,³ Indiana,⁴ Maine,⁵ [*686] Michigan,⁶ *New Hampshire,⁷ Pennsylvania,⁸ Tennessee,⁹ Vermont,¹⁰ Maryland, and Kansas.¹¹

15. In respect to the other qualification of a testator, namely, what is called "a sound and disposing mind and memory," it is impossible to draw a precise line between such as are and such as are not thus qualified. The difficulty is in fixing and applying anything like a uniform test or standard. In a case in Vermont, the court, Redfield, J., uses this language: "He must undoubtedly retain sufficient *active* memory to collect in his mind, without prompting, particulars or elements of the business to be transacted, and to hold them in his mind a sufficient length of time to perceive at least their more obvious relations to each other, and to be able to form some rational judgment in relation to these." Among these *elements* he mentions the number of the testator's children, their deserts with reference to conduct and capacity, what he had done for them relatively to each other, and the amount and condition of his property, &c.¹² In another case, in Connecticut, the court held that it was not essential to the legal capacity of a testator to make a will, that he should be capable of managing business generally. It is sufficient if, in making his will, he understands what he is doing.¹³ The question of the mental capacity of a

¹ Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 136, § 12, may make a will like any person.

² Code, 1867, § 2378, has a general power of devising by will.

³ Stat. 1855, ch. 110, § 1, has full power of disposal by will.

⁴ By Stat. 1859, has full power to devise her lands without the concurrence of her husband. *Noble v. Enos*, 19 Ind. 72.

⁵ Rev. Stat. 1857, ch. 61, § 1, may devise by will as if sole.

⁶ Rev. Stat. 1864, ch. 68, § 1, same as California.

⁷ Gen. Stat. 1867, ch. 164, § 12, may devise, saving husband's rights by marriage contract.

⁸ Dunlop, *Laws*, pp. 996, 997, and Act, 1855, No. 456, may devise her estate, subject to certain rights of husband, as to curtesy, &c.

⁹ Stat. 1852, ch. 180, § 4, may devise any estate secured to her separate use.

¹⁰ Gen. Stat. 1863, ch. 71, § 17, has general power of devise of her own lands.

¹¹ Code, Maryland, 1860, p. 686, with consent of husband subscribed to will; Gen. Laws, Kansas, 1860, ch. 141, § 4, but shall not bequeath away from her husband more than one half of her property, both real and personal, without his consent in writing. In Nebraska, with husband's consent. Rev. Stat. 1866, p. 81. In Nevada, the same as if she were sole. Rev. Stat. 1866, p. 290.

¹² *Converse v. Converse*, 21 Verm. 170.

¹³ *Kinne v. Kinne*, 9 Conn. 102. See *Stewart v. Lisenard*, 26 Wend. 235.

testator to make a will, has reference to the point of time when it is made. If sane then, it makes no difference that he was, at the time, under guardianship as an insane person.¹ Nor that he committed suicide shortly after, since that act is only in the nature of evidence bearing upon the point.² Among the most remarkable cases where a will, made by a lunatic, was held to be *made in a lucid interval, is that of [*687] Cartwright v. Cartwright,³ where the testatrix's hands were untied by the person who had charge of her as a furious lunatic, and she sat down and wrote her own will, which was so proper and consistent in all its parts that the court sustained it. On the other hand, though, as to most subjects, the testator may be sane, yet if, in respect to one or more subjects he is under an habitual insane delusion, and makes his will under the influence of such delusion, and its terms are modified or controlled thereby, such will would be invalid. An instance, illustrative of this partial insanity or monomania in the testator which avoids a will, was the case of Mr. Greenwood, a lawyer, whose will was made while he was in full practice at the bar, and was set aside on account of an insane delusion in respect to a brother, under the influence of which he disinherited him.⁴

16. In respect to the question, who may be devisees, there is scarcely any limit except such as is created by statute, as in England, by those against mortmain. In some of the United States, as, for instance, in New York, corporations may be devisees only to a limited extent prescribed by statute. So in Delaware, a church may not be a devisee. But *femes covert*, infants, aliens, and persons of nonsane memory may be devisees, and take accordingly.⁵

17. There is one class of devises authorized by statute, where the ordinary requirement that there should be some dis-

¹ Breed v. Pratt, 18 Pick. 115.

² Brooks v. Barrett, 7 Pick. 94.

³ 1 Phillim. 90. See 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 29, notes of American cases.

⁴ See 1 Wms. Exrs. 27, and 3 Add. 96, 97, and Erskine's Speech in Hadfield's case.

⁵ 4 Kent, Com. 506, 507; 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 57, and notes; Willard, Real Est. 475; 1 Jarm. Wills, 59, and Perkins's note; Ferguson v. Hedges, 1 Harring. 524. No general statute of mortmain exists in the United States, except in Pennsylvania. 6 Cruise, Dig. 128, note.

tinct person or class of persons named as the devisees who are capable of taking, in order to have the devise effective, is dispensed with. These are devises "to charitable uses," which are the subjects of the statute of 43 Eliz. ch. 4, which has been substantially, though not by re-enactment, adopted as the law of many of the United States. The preamble to that [*688] statute recites the nature and classes of these *devises, such as those for the maintenance of the sick, of schools of learning, of education, and for the preferment of orphans, and a great variety of other public or benevolent objects, in which no persons or corporations are named, or trustees created, to hold and manage the property, or, if named, the beneficiaries are not designated. In cases like these, devises would, at law, be utterly void for want of a person of sufficient capacity to take as devisee.¹ And, as the law still is, a bequest for such "benevolent" purposes as trustees may agree upon does not come within the rule of "charitable devises."² Under this statute, courts of chancery are empowered to appoint commissioners to superintend the application and enforcement of such charities, so that the devises are made to take effect, and if, from any cause, the charity cannot be applied precisely as the testator has declared, such courts exercise the power in some cases of appropriating it, according to the principles indicated in the devise, as near as they can, to the purpose expressed. And this is called an application *cy pres*.³ But still, if the charity be of a general, indefinite, and mere private nature, or not within the scope of the statute of Elizabeth, it will be treated as utterly void.⁴ A case occurring in Massachusetts, may serve to give a general idea of the nature of these devises. A testator gave estate, real and personal, "to the cause of Christ for the benefit and promotion of true evangelical piety and religion." He directed his executors to

¹ Story, Eq. Jur. §§ 1146, 1160, as to how far devisees must be designated to have devise take effect. See 6 Cruise, Dig. 133, note; *Vidal v. Girard*, 2 How. 127, 193; *Baptist Asso. v. Hart*, 4 Wheat. 33-49. *Levy v. Levy*, 33 N. Y. 102; *Loring v. Marsh*, 27 Law Rep. 377.

² *James v. Allen*, 3 Meriv. 17.

³ *Attorney-General v. Bower*, 3 Ves. 714; Story, Eq. Jur. §§ 1169, 1176. See *Bliss v. Am. Bible Society*, 2 Allen, 334.

⁴ Story, Eq. Jur. § 1183.

collect his property, &c., and pay it over to A, B, and C, naming them, "to be distributed in such divisions and to such societies and religious charitable purposes as they may think proper." One of the heirs brought a real action to recover a share of the testator's real estate, on the ground that a sale by the executor, for the purposes of paying over the proceeds to A, B, and C, was void. It was held, that the statute 43 Eliz. ch. 4, was in force in Massachusetts, and after referring to several cases of analogous devises which had been sustained, the court *held, that this case came within the principle [*689] of the statute, and sustained it as a good devise; the sale by the executor, for the purpose of executing it, was also held good. It is stated that though the statute was never in force in Pennsylvania, as that State had no court of Chancery, a principle like it was incorporated into the common law.¹

18. There were two statutes of Elizabeth relating to charitable uses, one 39 and 40 of that reign, ch. 5 and 6, the other 43 and 44, ch. 4. But it is chiefly in relation to the last that reference is herein made. The subjects embraced in this *statute* will be found recited in the note below.* But being of a highly remedial nature, the courts have been very liberal in extending it to various related matters not enumerated in the act itself.² And not only so, but, by adopting the doctrine of "*Cy pres*," a devise for one object has been applied to another whose relation was exceedingly remote if not altogether foreign to that named in the devise. In respect to the

* NOTE. — "Relief of aged, impotent, and poor people, maintenance of sick and maimed soldiers and mariners, schools of learning, free schools, and scholars in universities, repairs of bridges, ports, havens, causeways, churches, sea-banks, and highways, education and preferment of orphans, relief stock or maintenance for houses of correction, marriage of poor maids, supportation, aid and help of young tradesmen, handicraftsmen, and persons decayed, relief or redemption of prisoners or captives, and for aid or easement of any poor inhabitants concerning payment of fifteens, setting out soldiers and others."

¹ *Going v. Emery*, 16 Pick. 107-119; 1 Jarm. Wills. 197, 1st Am. ed. notes; 4 Kent, Com. 508, and American cases cited in note; *Vidal v. Girard*, 2 How. 127, 192; *Zimmerman v. Anders*, 6 Watts & S. 218; *Witman v. Lex*, 17 S. & R. 88; *Baptist Asso. v. Hart*, 4 Wheat. 1. See *Green v. Dennis*, 6 Conn. 292, 299; *Dexter v. Gardner*, 7 Allen, 246; *Earle v. Wood*, 8 Cush. 430.

² See *Tappan v. Deblois*, 45 Me. 128.

extent to which this statute of the 43 Elizabeth has been incorporated into the jurisprudence of this country by re-enactment or otherwise, it is stated by Mr. Perkins, in his note to Jarman on Wills,¹ that it is in force in North Carolina and Kentucky, that the principle and substance of it is a part of the law of Massachusetts, and is a part of the common law of Pennsylvania, where it is practically acted upon, though not technically in force;² that it has been repealed in Virginia, and is not in force in Maryland, while it is doubtful how far it is in force in Mississippi. In Virginia and New York, as it now seems, charitable devises and bequests stand upon the same footing as other trusts.³ In Massachusetts, the statute of 43 Elizabeth is in force, and, among other things, a gift to encourage learning, science, and the useful arts, though it have no reference to the poor. A corporation, having accepted a donation as a charity, cannot renounce it, but may be compelled to hold and apply it. If a trustee declines to accept such a donation, other persons will be appointed for that purpose, and the legacy will not revert to the heirs of the donor. Where there is a trust which cannot be strictly and literally observed, the court may cause it to be fulfilled as nearly in conformity with the intent of the donor as practicable, and upon this the court are to exercise their discretion. Thus, the trustees of Count Rumford's fund were authorized to appropriate a part of the income not needed for the purposes expressed in the donation, to the purchase of books, philosophical apparatus, and procuring lectures, although the objects proposed were the promotion of discovery and improvement in light and heat.⁴ Mr. Dwight, in his argument referred to in the note below,* cites authorities showing that the doctrine of

* NOTE.—The question has been more than once raised and discussed with great learning and research, whether, and how far courts of chancery in England had jurisdiction of and enforced trusts for charitable purposes before the statute of Elizabeth, or whether it derived this jurisdiction from the provision of these acts. Without attempting to give the cases in which this

¹ 1 Jarman. 197, n.; 4 Kent, 8th ed. 567, note.

² *Fontain v. Ravenel*, 17 How. 386.

³ *Gallego v. Attorney-General*, 3 Leigh, 450; *Levy v. Levy*, 33 N. Y. 137.

⁴ *American Academy v. Harvard College*, 12 Gray, 582.

charitable uses has been recognized in Maine, Vermont, New Jersey, Ohio, Iowa, South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana.¹ It is also in force in Maine.² And the case of *Williams v. Williams*, cited in the note below, shows that it was received as

question has been raised in their chronological order, it will be sufficient to refer to some of them, with the remark, that upon no subject in American jurisprudence will there be found more elaborate investigations into the ancient law of England, than into the administration of charities before the statute referred to.

In 1833, the question was raised in the case of *Magill v. Brown* [Sarah Zane's will], (Brightly's Rep. 346-411), and decided by *Baldwin, J.*, of the Circuit Court of United States. The same subject was discussed in *McCartee v. Orphan Asylum*, in 1827 (9 Cowen, 427-535). It was examined most elaborately by Mr. George Wood, of counsel, and Chancellor Williams, in *Executors of Burt v. Smith*, in 1835 (7 Verm. 241-319). A part of the head note to that case is, "Courts of Chancery had jurisdiction of bequests to charitable uses before the statute of 43 Elizabeth, by virtue of their equity jurisdiction." It was again raised in Massachusetts, by *Wilde, J.*, in 1839, in *Burbank v. Whitney* (24 Pick. 152, 153). And very eminent counsel were, in the same year, engaged before the court of Ohio, more or less directly, in a similar discussion in the case of *Trustees of McIntire Poor School v. Zanesville C. & M. Co.* (9 Ohio, 203-290).

Chancellor Kent says: "The weight of English opinion and argument would seem to be in favor of an original and necessary jurisdiction in chancery, in respect to bequests and devises in trusts, to persons competent to take for charitable purposes, when the general object of the charity was specific and certain, and not contrary to any positive rule of law," and he adds: "It would appear from the preamble to the statute of Elizabeth, that it did not intend to give any new validity to charitable donations, but rather to provide a new and more effectual remedy for the breaches of these trusts." (2 Com. 287-289; 4 Com. 508.) See also *Shotwell v. Mott*, 2 Sandf. Ch. 46. Mr. Perkins, in his note to *Jarman on Wills* (197), has collected a large number of cases in which the question was raised, and reaches a conclusion in favor of an original jurisdiction in the court of chancery, independent of the statute of Elizabeth, and the same doctrine is sustained by Judge Story, in his last edition of *Equity Jurisprudence* (§§ 1154, c. &

¹ *Trustees, &c. v. Zanesville C. & M. Co.* 9 Ohio, 203; *Griffin v. Graham*, 1 Hawks. 96; *Gallego v. Attorney-General*, 3 Leigh, 450; *Gass v. Wilhite*, 2 Dana, 170; *Going v. Emery*, 16 Pick. 107; *Vidal v. Girard's Ex'rs*, 2 How. 146; *Burr's Ex'rs v. Smith*, 7 Verm. 241; *Dashiel v. Attorney-General*, 5 H. & Johns. 392; *Tappan v. Deblois*, 43 Me. 122, 128, 131; *Miller v. Chittenden*, 2 Iowa, 315; *Beall v. Fox*, 4 Ga. 404; *American Bible Soc. v. Wetmore*, 17 Conn. 181. See also *Baptist Asso. v. Hart*, 4 Wheat. 1; *Shotwell v. Mott*, 2 Sandf. Ch. 46; *Lalor, Real Est.* 126-154.

² *Howard v. Am. Peace Soc.* 49 Me. 302.

a part of the law of New York. But in subsequent cases in that State, the courts have shown an inclination to doubt, at first, and afterwards to disavow altogether, the doctrine of indefinite charitable trusts which have prevailed in England

1154, d.), in which he states, that in the case of Mr. Girard's will, the Supreme Court of the United States held, "that there was a jurisdiction in chancery over charitable trusts antecedent to the statute of Elizabeth." (See *Beall v. Fox*, 4 Ga. 404; *Moore v. Moore*, 4 Dana, 357.) In *Potter v. Thornton*, 7 R. I. 263, the court say: "It is conceded that chancery jurisdiction over charities is not conferred, either here or in England, by statute, but existed prior to any statute on the subject. And the court of Texas say, that opinions similar to those above expressed by Ch. Kent, appear to have been held in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi, but they do not decide whether equity there will enforce a donation to charitable uses, where the donees are uncertain, or where the beneficiaries and objects of the trust are uncertain and indefinite. But there would be no doubt where there is an ascertained trustee competent to take, though the beneficiaries themselves are not known. *Bell Co v. Alexander*, 22 Tex. 362, 364.

But the then fullest and most able discussion of the point, had been, in what is often spoken of in the courts, as the "great argument" of Mr. Binney, in *Vidal v. Girard's Executors* (2 How. 146-164), in which he maintained, that such uses as were declared in Mr. Girard's will were good at common law in England, that such trusts were entitled to protection in equity, upon the general principles of equity jurisdiction, that they enjoyed the protection before the 43 Elizabeth, by the original jurisdiction of that court, and that the 43 Elizabeth was only an ancillary remedy. The importance of maintaining these, consisted in the admitted fact, that, as a statute, the 43 Elizabeth had no validity or operation in Pennsylvania, and, consequently, if the will was to be sustained, it must be by virtue of the common law, independent of that statute. As stated above by Judge Story, the Supreme Court sustained the will in a very learned and elaborate opinion. See also *Inglis v. Trustees of Sailors' Snug Harbor*, per *Johnson, J.*, 3 Pet. 140. But in New York the question has come up in a somewhat different form, but, in the opinion of very able counsel, has never been fully settled there. The Revised Statutes of that State (Part 2, ch. 1, tit. 1, art. 2, § 46), abolished uses and trusts, with certain exceptions. If, therefore, charitable uses and trusts were included in this clause, they could no longer be sustained. The question came up in the court of appeals, in 1853, in the case of *Williams v. Williams* (4 Seld. 525-558. See also *Lalor, Real Est.* 130-163), in which the court, *Denio, J.* says, among other things: "From a careful examination of these authorities, I have come to the conclusion that the law of charities was, at an indefinite but early period, engrafted upon the common law,"—"and that the statute of charitable uses was not introductory of any new principle, but was only a less dilatory and expensive method of

under the statute of 43 Elizabeth. In arriving at this conclusion, the rulings in *Williams v. Williams* have been modified, and, so far as they sustain the English system of indefinite charitable uses, overruled. The subject is now

establishing charitable donations which were understood to be valid by the laws, antecedently in force." The conclusion of the court was, that "the law of charitable uses, as it existed in England at the time of the Revolution, and the jurisdiction of the court of chancery over these subjects, became the law of this State on the adoption of the constitution of 1777, that the law has not been repealed," &c. But the doctrine here stated is reviewed by the same court in *Bascom v. Albertson*, 34 N. Y. 618, and a directly contrary conclusion reached, confirming the opinion of *Selden, J.*, in *Owens v. Missionary Society*, 14 N. Y. 380. So that the law in New York now seems to be settled as stated in the text.

But the question had not been distinctly raised, whether there was a difference between real and personal estate in the application of the principles laid down in the case last-mentioned and others cited. This arose first in the case of *Beekman v. Bonsor* (23 N. Y. Rep. 298-318), and again in *Rose v. Rose Beneficent Association*, in the same court. In both these cases, Mr. Noyes maintained the doctrine, that, as to carry out the provisions of the wills required the establishment and management of trusts, the right and power to do this was abolished by the statute of New York, above cited. His first argument is printed at length in the 23 N. Y. Rep. (575-639), presenting an array of argument and authority which would have seemed to be exhaustive of the subject. But in the later case, a further argument of sixty-nine pages resumes the discussion, and develops still further the early and minute history of the law, with an examination of the decided cases. Referring to his former argument, he states what he proposes to sustain in the present one, "that, conceding that the English court of chancery did, prior to the statute of Elizabeth for charitable uses, take cognizance of trusts for charities, in some cases, yet those statutes were held to authorize the interference of that court in an entirely new class of cases, and introduced a new set of principles, and that the court of chancery did not exercise jurisdiction over trusts for charities or over charitable uses prior to those statutes, except in cases where gifts of personal estate were made by act *inter vivos* to persons capable of taking for definite charitable purposes, or where lands or the uses of lands were, by will or deed, directed to be applied for the like purposes, and only there under its general power to enforce the performance of trusts, and between persons competent to sue."

These points are labored with great thoroughness and ability, and it must be deemed as unfortunate for the ascertainment of the law of New York, that the question remains undecided by the court, inasmuch as the cases in both instances turned upon other matters, than the effect of abolishing uses and trusts upon charitable trusts in lands. But so far as the entire learning upon the subject, and an exhaustive argument upon its application and legal

regarded as within the provisions of the revised statutes in respect to uses and trusts.¹ The doctrine is thus stated in *Bascom v. Albertson*: "Under our law a bequest which does not vest in definite donees, either in law or equity, on the death of the testator, or within a period thereafter measured by lives in being, can never vest." (p. 596.) The doctrine of "*Cy pres*," which has formed so important a part in the English courts in carrying out the law of charitable uses, does not, necessarily, enter into the administration of the doctrine of the law itself

merits, can supply the want of a judicial decision, they are to be found in the arguments of the counsel in those cases, especially the last. Mr. Dwight, in the *Rose Will* case, devotes an argument of 389 pages, to establish the validity of the devise therein made to a charitable use, in which he reviews the reports of the English commissioners of charities, in thirty-seven folio volumes, the calendars of the courts of chancery in the time of Elizabeth in three volumes, and the calendars of the Duchy of Lancaster in three volumes, and, among other things, insisted that where uses and trusts were coupled together, in legal phrase, they implied private trusts, and did not intend public charities; that permanent trusts for charities existed long before the statute of uses, and that the law of charities admitted perpetuities, as well as the doctrine of *cy pres*, while private trusts spring out of the statute of uses, and are modern in their character. See also 2 Kent, 334, 8th ed. note. It is now settled in New York, that charitable trusts are within the statute against perpetuities. *Beekman v. Bonsor*, 23 N. Y. 316; *Bascom v. Albertson*, 34 N. Y. 620. And in Pennsylvania, it is said a present gift to a charity is never a perpetuity, though intended to be inalienable. *Philadelphia v. Girard*, 45 Penn. St. 26. Besides the cases thus collected, Mr. Dwight also referred to many other early and later cases, and a series of early statutes from the 6th of Edw. I., to the 4 and 5 James I., which are printed in what is called "an appendix" to his argument, forming a volume of nearly 500 pages.

Nor will it be thought misplaced, it is hoped, upon a subject as important as that of public and charitable trusts, to have occupied so much space in reviewing some of the leading cases which bear upon the rules which limit and govern them. Nor, in the absence of decided cases, and in view of the regret expressed by Chancellor Kent, that "in the recent revision of the laws of New York, this very interesting and vexatious question was not put at rest by an explicit provision," can it be ill-timed, to lay before the reader the views of eminent counsel, who have made the subject a matter of thorough investigation and profound research and reflection.

¹ *Bascom v. Albertson*, 34 N. Y. 584, 590, 620; *Levy v. Levy*, 33 N. Y. 97, 122, 132, 133; *Downing v. Marshall*, 23 N. Y. 366.

in this country. And the manner in which it has been exercised in England would be likely to render courts here slow in assuming such an authority. Not to multiply illustrations, one may serve as an example. Money had been bequeathed to found a Jews' Synagogue, and in executing the devise as a charity, the court transferred it to the benefit of a *foundling hospital*!¹ In some of the States it is held to be a power not to be exercised by the courts.² In others, it is treated of as of doubtful validity,³ while in others, the court exercise it, if at all, in strict conformity to the purposes expressed in the instrument creating the trust.⁴ It was held by Clifford, J., that the prerogative power of the English courts, as to the doctrine of *Cy pres*, is not within the jurisdiction of the United States court.⁵ In Pennsylvania this power of *Cy pres* is one by which a well-defined charity, or one where the means of definition are given, may be enforced in favor of the general intent, even where the means or mode provided for by the donor, fail by reason of their inadequacy or unlawfulness. It is the doctrine of approximation, and is not confined to the administration of charities.⁶ Where a trust is created for a charitable use, it is no objection to its validity that it creates a perpetuity.⁷

*19. In respect to what real property may be de- [*690]
vised, there seem to be few or no restrictions by law. Everything that would descend to the testator's heir upon his death, whether a legal or equitable interest, may be devised, and while this would exclude the interest of a joint-tenant which goes to a survivor, it includes executory interests in real estate, or possibilities coupled with an interest, but not mere

¹ Story, Eq. § 1169.

² *Beekman v. Bonsor*, 23 N. Y. 308, 310; *McAnley v. Wilson*, 1 Dev. Ch. 276; *Moore v. Moore*, 4 Dana, 357.

³ *Brown v. Concord*, 33 N. H. 285.

⁴ *Harvard College v. Society, &c.* 3 Gray, 283. See 7 Ves., Sumner's ed. 36, note.

⁵ *Loring v. Marsh*, 27 Law Rep. 390. See *Fontain v. Ravenel*, 17 How. 369.

⁶ *Philadelphia v. Girard, &c.* 45 Penn. St. 28; *Methodist Church v. Remington*, 1 Watts, 226; *Fontain v. Ravenel*, 17 How. 389.

⁷ *Gass v. Wilhite*, 2 Dana, 183; *Griffin v. Graham*, 1 Hawks, 131. See Mr. Dwight's argument, cited in note, p. 421; *Miller v. Chittenden*, 2 Iowa, 362; *Hillyard v. Miller*, 10 Penn. St. 335; *Lewis, Perpet.* 687, 689; *contra, Levy v. Levy*, 33 N. Y. 130, 132; *Bascom v. Albertson*, 34 N. Y. 598; *Beekman v. Bonsor, sup.*

possibilities.¹ Thus, where a devise was upon a condition subsequent, with a general devise by a residuary clause in the testator's will, and the first devisee forfeited his estate by failing to perform the condition, it was held, that the right to enforce the condition and to take the estate thereby forfeited, passed by such devise to the residuary devisee, and did not descend to the testator's heirs.² So, if one grant an estate tail, he [*691] has still a reversion in him which may *possibly take effect by failure of issue of his grantee, and is the subject of devise by the grantor.³

20. So where one granted lands on condition subsequent, upon the breach of which the grantor or his heirs might enter and regain the estate, and the grantor then made his will containing a general residuary clause, it was held, that the devisee therein named took thereby a right to enforce the condition as to said land, and recover the same for a breach thereof.⁴ Any possibility, coupled with an interest, is the subject of devise.⁵

21. Cases like the above are to be distinguished from those of lapsed devises, which occur, when the person to whom the testator gives the land dies before the testator. Such devise, at common law, would lapse though in several, if not all the States, if it is made to a son or grandson of the testator, it takes effect, by force of statute, in favor of the heirs of such son or grandson, if he die before the testator.⁶ But a devise which fails by lapsing, does not go to the residuary devisee, but to the heir at law of the testator, on the ground that the intent of the testator is to be taken as things stand when the will is made, and that he is not to be presumed to have intended to give to his residuary devisee what he had already given to one whom

¹ *Kean v. Roe*, 2 Harring. 112.

² 1 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 40-44; *Hayden v. Stoughton*, 5 Pick. 528; *Brigham v. Shattuck*, 10 Pick. 306. See 4 Kent, Com. 511, 513. The reader is referred to Mr Hare's discussion of this subject, and his comments upon the cases above cited. 1 Smith, Lead. Cas. 114.

³ *Steel v. Cook*, 1 Met. 281; 1 Jarm. Wills, 42, Perkins' note.

⁴ *Austin v. Cambridgeport Parish*, 21 Pick. 215. *Contra*, *Southard v. Central R. R. Co.* 2 Dutch. 13, 21. Such rights made devisable by Stat. 1 Vict. 26; 1 Jarm., Perk. ed. 85.

⁵ *Den v. Mannors*, 1 Spencer, 142.

⁶ 6 Greenl. Cruise, Dig 128, note; 1 Jarm. Wills, Perk. ed. 301, note; *Moore & Dimond*, 5 R. L. 121. *Sheets v. Grubbs* 4 Met. (Ky.) 340.

he expected to survive him, and what he would have taken if the will had taken effect at its date.¹ But if the devise is void *ab initio*, either because the devisee is dead before the will is made,² or is by law incapable of taking the devise, as would be the case at common law where the devise is to a monk,³ or, as in some cases, if made to corporations under the prohibitions of statutes;⁴ in such cases there seems *to be a [*692] diversity in the law as to who shall take such void devise, whether the heir at law or the residuary devisee. The English cases, and an American case cited above, are inclined to construe a devise by the residuary clause of what the testator has not before devised, to intend all his estate which his will would not have effectually passed, if it had taken effect at its date, excluding, as above stated, any devises that may have lapsed between the making of the will and the death of the testator. The weight of American authority, however, is in favor of such devises going to the testator's heirs, on the ground that, by his having in terms devised it in a particular manner, he clearly indicated his intent that it should not pass to his residuary devisee, although he was mistaken in the capacity of the legatee named, to take. In *Doe v. Stewart*, the devisee being dead when the will was made, the estate devised went to the residuary devisee and not the heir. The case given in *Perkins*, was of a devise to a monk for life, remainder to a stranger in fee, which was held to be a present estate in possession in the stranger. In the case of *Ferguson v. Hedges*, the devise was to a church which was incapable to take, the devise being void by the statutes of Delaware. The court held, that the estate passed to the residuary devisee, and the court rely upon the above cases of *Doe v. Underdown*, *Doe v. Sheffield*, and *Doe v. Scott*. And the language of the court in *Hayden v. Stoughton*, clearly favors this doctrine. But the rule which seems to be settled in *Van Kleeck v. The Dutch Church*, seems to be, that, by the

¹ *Doe v. Underdown*, Willes, 293; *Doe v. Scott*, 3 Maule & S. 300; *Hayden v. Stoughton*, 5 Pick. 528, 537; *Gravenor v. Hallum*, Ambl. 645; *Austin v. Cambridgeport Parish*, 21 Pick. 224.

² *Doe v. Sheffield*, 13 East, 526.

³ *Perkins*, §§ 566, 567.

⁴ *Ferguson v. Hedges*, 1 Harring. 524; *Van Kleeck v. The Dutch Church*, 20 Wend. 427; *State v. Whitbank*, 2 Harring. 18.

common law, a residuary devisee of real estate takes only what was intended for him *at the time of making the will*, though a different rule prevails in respect to personal estate, and, consequently, though the devise may not take effect from the disability on the part of the devisee to take, the estate devised will go to the testator's heirs at law.¹ The same principle is maintained in *Green v. Dennis*,² and *Lingan v. Carrol*.³

21 *a.* If an estate be devised to A for life, with a remainder over, after his death, to B, and A die in the lifetime of the testator, the estate will go directly to B, upon the death of the testator, the lapsing of the devise to A, in this case, leaving the will to take effect as if it had not been contained in it.⁴

[*693] *22. Upon the principle that what is descendible is devisable, it has been held, in some cases, by force of statute, and in others upon general principles, that the right of a disseisee to enter and regain the seisin of lands may be devised, and that the devisee may avail himself of the right so acquired.^{5*}

23. In construing devises, in respect to the estate or interest intended to be given to the devisee, much greater regard is had to the intention of the testator than in case of deeds. One reason is the strong desire there is in all courts, to carry out the intention of devisors when the same can be ascertained by reasonable construction; and another, that as wills do not owe their origin to the feudal law, the rule of construction is not necessarily governed by the analogy of that law. It is accord-

* NOTE. — The foregoing cases have been referred to, by way of example, as to the kinds of interest which a testator may dispose of by last will, and, for a further statement of the law upon the subject, the reader is referred to pp. *291, *367, *368, ante, and 4 Kent, Com. 511.

¹ *Van Kleeck v. The Dutch Church*, 20 Wend. 457.

² *Green v. Dennis*, 6 Conn. 292.

³ *Lingan v. Carrol*, 3 Harr. & M'H. 333. See also 1 Jarm. Wills, Perk. ed. 302, note; *Brewster v. McCall's Devises*, 15 Conn. 297.

⁴ *Lawrence v. Hebbard*, 1 Bradf. 250; *Goodall v. McLean*, 2 Bradf. 306; *Prescott v. Prescott*, 7 Met. 141.

⁵ 1 Jarm. Wills, 43, 1st Am. ed. and notes; Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 92, § 3. This is said to be the law in New York, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Maine, Alabama, Connecticut, North Carolina, Illinois, and Ohio. 4 Kent, Com. 512.

ingly held, that in a will "issue" is either a word of *purchase* or *limitation*, as will best answer the intention of the deviser, though in a deed it is universally taken as a word of *purchase*.¹ But still, except where otherwise provided by statute, under a general devise of a parcel of land to one without any words of inheritance or limitation, he takes only an estate for life.² There would be an exception to the above rule in those States where the limitation of an estate by deed, in indefinite terms, carries a fee.³

23 *a.* In construing wills, it is often necessary, in order to carry out the intention of the testator, for courts to change the words of the will by substituting one for another. Thus, a devise upon certain contingencies to "all" the children of *each* of said sons, has been held to mean "any." So the word "several," when applied to the death of testator's children, has been held to intend the death of such children "respectively."⁴ But the most frequent application of this rule has been in the words "or" and "and," substituting the one for the other. Thus a devise to A and his heirs, and in case of his death under twenty-one "*or*" without issue, then over, has been held to mean "and"; it being the obvious intention of the testator that the estate should go over only in case the first-named devisee died without issue, under the age of twenty-one. Mr. Jarman gives numerous instances of this change in the cases which he has collected, and Mr. Perkins, in his note, has added largely to the number. And as an illustration of the converse of the above proposition, there may be mentioned the case of a devise over, if the legatee first named die unmarried "*and*" without issue, where it was held to intend "or" without issue.⁵

¹ Doe v. Collis, 4 T. R. 299.

² 2 Jarm. Wills, 124, 2d Am. ed., Perkins' note of American Cases; 4 Kent, Com. 537.

³ See ante, vol. 1. p. *29; Mass. Gen. Stat. ch. 92, § 5. For the application of the rule in Shelley's case to devises, see ante, ch. 4, § 8.

⁴ See Turner v. Withers, 13 Law Reg. 723-733, as to "survivor" when applied to several children in a devise, meaning "other." In Dexter v. Gardner, the court held, "preparatory" to be the same as "preparative" in describing the object of a devise. 7 Allen, 243.

⁵ 1 Jarm., Perk. ed. 414-425; Holcomb v. Luke, 1 Dutch. 605; Grim v. Dyar, 3 Duer, 354; Jackson v. Topping, 1 Wend. 396; Jackson v. Blanshan, 6 Johns. 54.

So where the devise was to a third person, "if my daughter die before arriving at lawful age, or have no lawful issue." But if she have lawful issue, then he leaves the whole to her in fee. She died without issue, but not till after arriving at age, and it was held that upon her arriving at age she took a fee.¹ A will reciting the intention of testator to go to Cuba, and a wish to make a disposition of his estate if he should not return, and disposing of his property in form, was held a valid testament, although he returned from Cuba, and died leaving his will unchanged.²

24. If the terms of a devise clearly indicate an intention in the devisor to dispose of his entire estate in the property devised, it will be construed to convey a fee.³ Among the forms of expression which, when applied to *estates* by a devisor, have been held to indicate such intention, are "all my estate," &c., where the term is not used as a mere description of the premises, but as relating to the ownership of them.⁴ So my "landed property," in, &c.⁵ to "A in fee-simple," to "A forever," to "A and his assigns forever," "all my right," and "all my right and title,"⁶ would pass a fee.

25. So where the testator charges upon the devisee the payment of money in respect to the property devised to him, if it is a personal charge, the law will deem the interest that he takes to be a fee, because it assumes that the testator intended to benefit the devisee, whereas, if he only had a life estate, he might die before he had derived any beneficial fruits of the devise.⁷ But still it would not receive that construction, if the estate devised was expressly a life estate.⁸ Where one devised

¹ Johnson v. Simcock, 7 H. & Norm. 344. ² Damon v. Damon, 8 Allen, 192.

³ Fox v. Phelps, 17 Wend. 393; s. c. 20 Wend. 437; 2 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 171, note; Baker v. Bridge, 12 Pick. 27.

⁴ 4 Kent, Com. 540; 2 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 181, and Perkins' note of American cases; Brown v. Wood, 17 Mass. 68; Den v. Wood, Cam. & N. 202; Kellogg v. Blair, 6 Met. 322.

⁵ Fogg v. Clark, 1 N. H. 163; Roe v. Pattison, 16 East, 221; Mitchell v. Mitchell, 1 Ired. 257; 6 Cruise, Dig. 217.

⁶ 2 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 180; Id. 192, and Perkins' note. And see cases collected in Greenleaf's note to 6 Cruise, Dig. 211.

⁷ 2 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 172 and note; 4 Kent, Com. 540; Bell v. Scammon, 15 N. H. 390.

⁸ Moore v. Dimond, 5 R. I. 121; 2 Jarmyn, 126, Park. ed.

lands to his wife and directed that all his children should be educated and settled according to her discretion, it was held to create a personal charge upon her, and to give her a fee in the same.¹ But it would be otherwise if the payment were charged upon the estate, and not upon the devisee personally.²

26. The devise of wild or uncultivated land in Maine or Massachusetts, and, probably, elsewhere, where the common law prevails, would be construed to pass a fee in the same, for a mere tenant for life might be guilty of waste in clearing, or might have no benefit in fitting it for cultivation.³

27. Whether a devise in trust shall create a legal estate of inheritance in the trustee or not, depends upon the nature of the trust. If the trust is one which requires him to take a fee, it will be construed accordingly.⁴ A devise to an executor to sell is of this class.⁵

28. A fee may be given, by implication, when the estate bears such a relation to some other estate as to render such a *construction a reasonable one, as where the [*695] devise was to one "after the death of the testator's wife," it was held to be a remainder in fee to him, and an estate for life, by implication, to the wife. So where the devise was to A, if B died before he was twenty-one years of age. The estate to B was held to be a fee by implication, if he attained the age of twenty-one.⁶

29. A devise to one in such a form as implies an absolute right to dispose of the property at pleasure, gives a fee.⁷ Unless the right of disposal is given as a *power* incident to the estate given her. If it is, it does not enlarge the estate given, if less than a fee, into one of inheritance.⁸

¹ Lloyd v. Jackson, L. R. 2 Q. B. 273.

² Jackson v. Martin, 18 Johns. 31; Jackson v. Bull, 10 Johns. 148; Lindsay v. McCormack, 2 A. K. Marsh. 229; McLellan v. Turner, 15 Me. 436.

³ Russell v. Elden, 15 Me. 193; Sargent v. Towne, 10 Mass. 303.

⁴ 4 Kent, Com. 540; ante, p. *186.

⁵ Inman v. Jackson, 4 Me. 237.

⁶ 4 Kent, Com. 541, 542; Butler v. Little, 13 Me. 239; 2 Jarm. Wills, 2d Am. ed. 175; Ellis v. Essex Bridge, 2 Pick. 243.

⁷ Ramsdell v. Ramsdell, 21 Me. 288; Ide v. Ide, 5 Mass. 500; Attorney-General v. Hall, Fitzg. 314.

⁸ Surman v. Surman, 5 Mad. 123; Larned v. Bridge, 17 Pick. 339; Kuhn v. Webster, 12 Gray, 16.

30. A devise of the rents and profits of land or the income of land, is equivalent to a devise of the land itself, and will be for life or in fee, according to the limitation expressed in the devise.¹ So a devise of testator's tenements and hereditaments passes a perpetual rent which had been reserved to the testator.² So it is competent for a testator to create a charge upon land he may devise in favor of a third person, and whoever takes the estate would become chargeable therefor, or take the estate charged with the legacy.³ So the word "produce," when applied to a trust of real and personal estate, may be construed to signify whatever the estate will yield by sale or otherwise.⁴ But in these cases there would be an exception to this rule, if the rents, &c. were given for a limited period only.⁵

31. The interest of a devisee vests immediately on the death of the testator, and, when the will is duly proved, it relates back to that point of time.⁶ If, therefore, it be in terms a present one, and nobody is *in esse* capable to take at the testator's death, it is void, as if it be the heirs of J. S., and J. S. be then living. But if it had been in terms deferred to the death of J. S., as to the heir of J. S. after his death, the devise would have been good as an executory devise.⁷

31 *a.* In view of the law which requires devisees to be sufficiently described to be identified in order to take under a devise, and the invariable doctrine which declares that "undoubtedly, every part of a will should be in writing,"⁸ questions have arisen how far parol evidence is competent to establish either a

¹ *Anderson v. Greble*, 1 Ashm. 136; *Reed v. Reed*, 9 Mass. 372; *Blanchard v. Brooks*, 12 Pick. 63; *Blanchard v. Blanchard*, 1 Allen, 225; *South v. Allaire*, 1 Salk. 228; 2 Jarm., Perk. ed. 380, and note; *Schermerhorne v. Schermerhorne*, 6 Johns. Ch. 70; *Kerry v. Derrick*, Cro. Jac. 104; *Earle v. Grim*, 1 Johns. Ch. 499; *Fox v. Phelps*, 17 Wend. 402; *Dismant v. Lore*, 30 N. J. Law, 222; *Wood v. Griffin*, 46 N. H. 234; *McClure v. Melendy*, 44 N. H. 469.

² *Van Rensselaer v. Read*, 26 N. Y. 558.

³ *Steele's Appeal*, 47 Penn. St. 437; *Swasey v. Little*, 7 Pick. 296; *Felch v. Taylor*, 13 Pick. 133.

⁴ *Newland v. Shepherd*, 2 P. Wms. 194.

⁵ *Fox v. Phelps*, *sup.*; *Earle v. Grim*, *sup.*

⁶ *Ex parte Fuller*, 2 Story, 327; *Ives v. Allyn*, 13 Verm. 629.

⁷ *Ante*, p. *343.

⁸ *Trustees, &c. v. Hart*, 4 Wheat. 1; *Swinburne*, pt. 7, § 7; *Hoge v. Hoge*, 1 Watts, 214.

devise or a devisee, or both. The rule requires express words, or a necessary implication, to take an estate from the heir at law, and give it to a devisee, under a will. But "it is often found that, while the devise is in definite terms, adequate to describe a person who is to take as devisee, there are extraneous circumstances which render it doubtful who is meant by this description. And in such case recourse is often had to parol evidence to ascertain who was intended as the devisee. Thus a devise to "The Congregational Society in A.," and there is more than one, evidence may be offered to show that the testator meant the "first" of these and the like. So a devise to "The Congregational Foreign Missionary Society," was shown to mean the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.¹ The question grows out of the nature of trusts and powers. Thus, suppose the devise be to A, how far can it be shown that he takes it as trustee for another who is really the object of the testator's bounty? Or, suppose it be given to A in trust, with power to distribute it to persons not named in the will, which have been or are to be indicated by the testator, or to such persons as the devisee shall think best. It would, perhaps, be difficult to collect from decided cases, a ready answer to all the hypothetical questions. And yet many of them seem to have been settled. In the first place, great latitude is allowed in creating trusts in this way in favor of charitable purposes, where the discretion of the devisee in trust is to be exercised in designating those who are to take beneficially under the devise.² There is a greater difficulty in defining how far this may be done in case of private and personal trusts. Nor is there any difference whether a devise be immediate to an indefinite object, or to a trustee for the use and benefit of an indefinite object. If it be immediate to an indefinite object, the property is not disposed of, and the trust results for the benefit of those to whom the law gives the property in the absence of any disposition of it by the testator.³ It seems, that if a devise be made for the purpose of creating an unlawful trust, as one, for instance, in

¹ Howard v. Am. Peace Soc. 49 Me. 288.

² Tainter v. Clark, 5 Allen, 66; Story, Eq. §§ 1165, 1166; Chapman v. Brown, 6 Ves. 410.

³ Dashiell v. Attorney-General, 5 H. & Johns. 400; Levy v. Levy, 33 N. Y. 103; Morice v. Bishop of Durham, 9 Ves. 400; Shep. Touch. 509.

violation of the law against mortmain, although the same be not declared in the will, the heir at law may file a bill against the devisee, and, upon the fact being established, he will be declared to be a trustee for the heir at law of the testator.¹ So if the devisor intended the devise to enure to the benefit of a particular person, but omitted to name him, in consequence of the one to whom he intended to devise the estate in trust agreeing to hold the property for such intended *cestui que trust*, it would be a fraud on the part of the devisee to claim it as his own, and, upon a bill in equity for that purpose, he would be declared to be trustee for the intended *cestui que trust*.² If, on the other hand, the devise be to one absolutely, to be disposed of by him as he shall see fit, or according to the wishes of the testator orally expressed to him, the devise is an absolute gift to him, and he can, if he choose, retain the same as his own.³ The difference between the cases being this. In the two former cases, there were the elements of illegality or fraud in the gift upon which a court of equity might attach a constructive trust. Whereas, in the latter, there was no fraud, and, under the statute of frauds, the trust, not being declared in writing, is not susceptible of proof, and of course leaves him with the uncontrolled property and possession of the subject-matter of the devise. There is still a somewhat different class of cases, which partake of the character of powers as well as of trusts, where, perhaps, the cases are not as distinct and satisfactory. As where, for instance, the devise is to a trustee named, expressly in trust that he shall dispose of it to such purposes as the testator had or should indicate orally to him, or to such persons and in such proportions as the trustee should judge would best meet the wishes of the devisor, or words to that effect, but without indicating them specifically. Now, by the familiar doctrine

¹ *Tiffany & Bullard, Trust.* 196, 197; *Muckleston v. Brown*, 6 Ves. 53, 67; *Lewin, Trusts*, 39; *Hill, Trusts*, 164.

² *Hoge v. Hoge*, 1 Watts, 214; *Lewin, Trust.* 39, that if trustee agrees to hold upon such trusts as devisee shall declare, and he makes no declaration, he is held to be a trustee for the heir. *Hill, Trust.* 227, 230; *Tiffany & Bullard, Trust.* 189; *Morey v. Herrick*, 18 Penn. St. 128.

³ *Wells v. Doane*, 3 Gray, 201; *Tiffany & Bullard, Trust.* 209, 218; *Maskelyne v. Maskelyne*, Amb. 750; *Barford v. Street*, 16 Ves. 135; *Hill v. Kingston*, 1 Meriv. 314; 2 Sugd. Pow. 173, 3d Am. ed. and note.

of powers, if such devise creates a proper power, and the same be properly executed, the appointee, to whom the trustee shall appoint the estate, takes it under the will as if named therein. And authorities may readily be referred to upon the effect of such a devise. Thus, under the first proposition above stated, it is said, in the authority cited "in the case of an individual, if an estate is devised to such person as the executor shall name and no executor is appointed, or if one being appointed, he dies in the testator's lifetime, and no other is appointed, the bequest becomes a nullity. Yet such a bequest, if expressed to be for a charity, would be good." In respect to the third proposition, the court, in the case cited, say: "The trust insisted upon here, however, owes its validity, not to the will or the declaration of the testator, but to the fraud of the devisee. It belongs to a class in which the trust arises *ex maleficio*, and in which equity turns the fraudulent procurer of the legal title into a trustee to get at him, and there is nothing in reason or authority to forbid the raising of such a trust from the surreptitious procurement of a devise." The case cited of *Wells v. Doane*, gives a full illustration of more than one of the above propositions. The will contained two devises, one, of the rest and remainder of testator's estate, real and personal, to S. W. during life, and after his death, "in such charities as shall be deemed most useful by the executor or administrator of S. W." The other was, "that S. W. may dispose of the furniture, &c. absolutely, as he may deem expedient, in accordance with my wishes as otherwise communicated by me to him." In speaking of this last, the court say: "No party denies that he had power to dispose of them by giving them absolutely during his life." The only question was as to the part which he left undisposed of, and it was held, that he had an absolute property in these. As to the other bequests, the court say: "We have no doubt that the bequest to charities is valid." They also recognise that there might have been a devise to him for life, with a power of disposal. And in *Brown v. Kelsey*, the devise was "for the promotion of such religious and charitable enterprises as shall be designated by a majority of the pastors composing the Middlesex Union Association." They met and made the appointment, and the devise was sustained accord-

ingly.¹ In respect to the other part of the subjects above suggested, where property is devised to one expressly in trust, but the persons in whose favor it is intended, are not named, or have been only orally named, it is not proposed to do more than refer generally to the authorities. In treatises upon trusts, there are chapters upon the "discretionary powers of trustees," under which numerous cases are collected. Thus, in Tiffany & Bullard on Trusts, ch. 6 (p. 728), it is said: "In the language of Lord Eldon, there is not only a mere power and a mere trust, but there is likewise known to the court a power with which a party is intrusted, and is required to execute. Such cases arise where the donor has intrusted the party with money or property to be used according to his judgment or discretion, for the use of certain persons or for a class of persons, but, nevertheless, to be used for others than himself. The discretion of the trustee is not absolute, but confined to the time, manner, or the *particular* individuals of a class." This covers the case of trusts in favor of a class named, but does not, in terms, reach cases where neither classes nor individuals are named in the will as the intended beneficiaries. The reader is also referred to the authorities cited below.² And though most, if not all, the cases referred to, may have been those where the class is mentioned, among whom the discretion is to be exercised, it would seem to be a fair inference from settled principles and decided cases, that, if the property is given to persons named, with a general power of appointing to whom they pleased, or to such as the testator may have orally recommended, the property would vest in them, and the devise would not be void for uncertainty. If no trust was declared, it might leave the matter discretionary with the devisees, and in that way make them the absolute owners. But if it was expressly declared to be in trust, that they should appoint, it would create a trust which a court of equity would compel them to execute, which, if they failed to do, by reason of death or other disability, the devise would probably fail and go to the testator's heirs at law, unless the class were indicated who were

¹ Brown v. Kelsey, 2 Cush. 243.

² Lewin, Trust. 430, 431; 2 Sugd. Pow., 3d Am. ed. 161, 162, note; Brown v. Higgs, 8 Ves. 574; Hill, Trust. 67-69, and note.

to take, where the court might execute the trust.¹ If it be given as a trust, but the objects as beneficiaries are too indefinite to be ascertained, the trustee will not take as owner, but the trust will fail altogether.²

32. There are various ways in which a devise may be rendered void or inoperative during the life of the testator, a will, as already stated, being, while the testator lives, ambulatory and inchoate, the will itself may be cancelled or destroyed, its terms as to particular provisions may be changed or annulled by a codicil which is nothing more than an additional will, enlarging or modifying the first, and which must be executed in all respects like the principle will itself, or particular devises in the will may be abrogated or annulled by the act of the testator in respect to the subject of the devise itself. Acts like these are called acts of revocation, and the revocation is said to be complete or partial according to the nature of the act. But to revoke a will, requires the same exercise of intelligent intention on the part of the testator, as the making the instrument at first.³ A case is stated in the Law In- [*696] telligencer of December 6, 1867, of a will upon which the testator had indorsed in his own handwriting "cancelled," without signing it. He left it in that state, but not among his other valuable papers, where it was found. It was held to be a revocation.⁴ And a similar decision was made by the court of Vermont.⁵ But in an earlier case the testator had written against one of the bequests and upon the face of the will, "obsolete," and it was held not to work a revocation.⁶ In a case in Ohio, the testator, who was blind, called for his will, which was sealed up, and it was handed to him. He felt of the seal, then

¹ See *Bull v. Bull*, 8 Conn. 47; *Hill, Trust.*, Whart. ed. 91; *Withers v. Yeadon*, 1 Rich. Eq. 324, 332; 2 Sugd. Pow., 3d Am. ed. 162, note.

² *Ellis v. Selby*, 1 Myl. & Craig, 299.

³ 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 115, and Perkins' note; 4 Kent, Com. 532; *Jackson v. Holloway*, 7 Johns. 81, was a case where the testator altered his will by interlineations, and a memorandum on the back attested by two witnesses, when three were necessary to a will, and held to be no revocation, as to any part of the will. *Ford v. Ford*, 7 Humph. 92, was a case where testator, in an insane fit, destroyed his will, and it was held no revocation.

⁴ *Evans' Appeal*.

⁵ *Warner v. Warner*, 13 Am. L. Rep. 351.

⁶ *Lewis v. Lewis*, 2 W. & Ser. 455

handed it to another, and told him to put it in the fire and burn it. He pretended to do so, burned another piece of paper to make the testator think he had done it, told him he had, but kept it and put it in his pocket. After testator's death the will was produced and allowed and held not to be revoked, as the testator had done none of the acts which, by statute, are declared sufficient to revoke a will.¹ A class of cases ought to be noticed in this connection, where testators have attempted to dispose of property by devise by reference in the will to other papers not executed in conformity to the rules prescribed as to wills, defining who should take, or the description of the property which is to pass by the will, and the like. Thus in *Habingham v. Vincent*, a testator made his will, giving a remainder to such person as he should appoint by deed. The next day he made a deed reciting his will, and appointing to the sons of C, &c. It was held, that nothing passed under and by the will, and that the deed must be valid in itself, or of no effect.² The same doctrine was held in the same case in chancery. Wilson, J., says: "I believe it is true, that, if a testator in his will refers expressly to any paper already written, and has so described it that there can be no doubt of the identity, and the will is executed in the presence of three witnesses, that paper, whether executed or not, makes a part of the will, and such reference is the same as if he incorporated it." And the same doctrine is maintained by the court of Pennsylvania.³ "But when a man declares he will, in some future paper, do something, he says he will make a will as far as his intention is then known to himself, but he will take time to consider what he shall do in future. — As a will it is void, because not properly executed." And Buller, J., says: "This last instrument (the deed) must be considered as a codicil," and then goes on to show that a codicil, to be valid, must be executed in the presence of the requisite number of witnesses.⁴ The question was fully examined in *Johnson v. Ball*, where it was definitely settled that a testator cannot by his will reserve a power to dispose of an estate at a future time by an instrument not executed as required in the case of wills, so as to take ef-

¹ *Kent v. Mahaffey*, 10 Ohio St. 204.

² *Habingham v. Vincent*, 5 T. R. 32.

³ *Thompson v. Lloyd*, 49 Penn. St. 129.

⁴ 2 Ves. Jr. 204, 228, 231.

fect under his will.¹ In Massachusetts, *the statute [*697] points out what acts shall operate as a revocation of a will, but expressly declares that the section shall not prevent a revocation implied by law from subsequent changes in the condition or circumstances of the testator.²

83. One mode of revocation of a devise in a will has already been alluded to, and that is by an alteration of the estate which is the subject of the devise. If, therefore, the testator, after making his will, convey away the whole or a part of an estate devised therein, it is an entire revocation, or one *pro tanto*, according to the extent of such alienation.³

84. The doctrine upon the subject seems to be that any change in the estate in the lands devised, by the act of the testator, such as a conveyance, though it be to his own use, or though he take back the same estate as he originally held, and continues seised till his death, it will be a revocation. And in one case, where the subject was discussed at length, there was held to be a revocation in equity of the devise of an estate, which the testator, after devising it, contracted to sell to a third party, but which, the sale never having been consummated, remained in the testator's hands unchanged till his death.⁴ The conveyance in the one case, and the bargaining away the estate in the other, are regarded as evidence of an intent to revoke the devise as to such property, and it then becomes requisite, in order for the land to be again the subject of the will, that a republication of this should be made after the testator shall have again acquired the estate.⁵ So, where a testator, holding, among other property, a mortgage of real estate, made his will, devising thereby all his estate, real and personal, to A B, and subsequently entered upon the premises and foreclosed *the mortgage, it was held to change [*698]

¹ Johnson v. Ball, 5 De Gex & S. 85; s. c. 9, Eng. L. & Eq. 159.

² Mass. Gen. Stat., ch. 92, § 11.

³ 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 130; Hawes v. Humphrey, 9 Pick. 350, 361; Carter v. Thomas, 4 Me. 341.

⁴ Walton v. Walton, 7 Johns. Ch. 258, 269, 271; 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 133; Darley v. Darley, 3 Wils. 6, 13; s. c. Ambl. 653; 4 Kent, Com. 527; Arthur v. Bockenham, Fitzg. 240; Kean's case, 9 Dana, 25.

⁵ Walton v. Walton, 7 Johns. Ch. 258, 270. But see M'Craine v. Clarke, 2 Murph. 317, as to contract of sale if not executed by death of owner.

the nature of the property so as to constitute it after-acquired estate, working a revocation *pro tanto*, and not to pass under the devise.¹ This was before the statute in relation to devises operating upon after-acquired estate.

35. So a conveyance of the land devised may operate a revocation of a devise, as indicating an intention on the part of the testator, although, from some defect in the form of proceeding, it becomes inoperative, as where livery is omitted to be made in a feoffment, or the deed in a bargain and sale is not enrolled, and the like. The estate so devised will, in such a case, go to the testator's heir at law.²

36. Without undertaking to enumerate everything that may be sufficient, on the part of the testator, to revoke his will, a revocation of the will of a *feme sole* is implied by the common law, by her subsequent marriage. As a married woman, at common law, could neither make nor revoke a will, it was held, that it would defeat the ambulatory character of such an instrument, if a will, made by a *feme sole* before marriage, were to remain valid during coverture.³

37. The marriage of a testator does not have this effect unless followed by a birth of a child. The concurrence of these two events, after the making of a will, is supposed to create such a change in the circumstances of the testator that he cannot intend to have his will, as formerly made, stand. But this is only a doctrine of presumed revocation, which, at the common law, may be controlled by the character and terms of the will itself.⁴

38. The matter is regulated in several of the States by positive law. Thus, in South Carolina, marrying and having children, who are living at the testator's death, operates as [*699] a revocation *of a prior will.⁵ In Georgia, marrying or having a child or children revokes a will, unless subsequently altered by the testator.⁶ In California, a marriage re-

¹ *Brigham v. Winchester*, 1 Met. 390.

² 4 Kent, Com. 529.

³ 4 Kent, Com. 527. A similar rule is established by statute in California. Stat. 1850-1853, p. 140, § 13. So in Illinois, Stat. 1858, p. 1179, § 9; 2 N. Y. Rev. Stat. p. 64.

⁴ 2 Greenl. Ev. § 684; 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 106; 4 Kent, Com. 521, 522; *Havens v. Van Den Burgh*, 1 Denio, 27. See *Warner v. Beach*, 4 Gray, 162.

⁵ 5 So. Car. Stat. 106.

⁶ Cobb, Dig. Stat. 347, 1128.

votes a will if the wife survives the testator, unless provision is made for her by a marriage contract, or in the will.¹ And in Arkansas, marriage and issue revoke a will, unless provision is made for them in the will, or by a marriage settlement.² In Pennsylvania, the birth of a child, which survives the testator, revokes a will previously made.³

39. Besides these, there are provisions in the statutes of many, if not all of the United States, for posthumous children, where none is made in the will of the testator, in some cases avoiding the will altogether; and also in some cases for children not named in the will, when the omission is accidental. But a testator may omit, if he sees fit, to make any provision for any or all of his children, and the will, nevertheless, be a valid one, if he clearly indicates thereby that such was his understanding and intention.⁴ A devise to a child or children does not include a grandchild, or grandchildren, unless indispensably necessary to effectuate the intent of the testator.⁵

40. A new will may operate to revoke a former one, if it contain words to that effect, or if the disposition of the property thereby made, is incompatible with that made in the prior will. But should the prior will remain uncanceled, and the latter one be destroyed, it may operate to give effect to the first as a will, if the testator leaves it unrevoked by any new act.⁶ But if one make a will, and then by a second will revoke the first, it can only be revived by republishing it. A cancelling of the second will, under such circumstances, does not revive the first. And in such a case, the deceased was held to have died intestate.⁷

41. It may be remarked, that at common law, a devise to an heir at law of the same estate in quantity or quality, as he would take by descent, would be void and he would take by

¹ Stat. 1850-1853, p. 140, § 12.

² Dig. Stat. 1073.

³ *Tomlinson v. Tomlinson*, 1 Ashm. 224.

⁴ 4 Kent, Com. 412; *Id.* 521, note, 525, 526; Mass. Gen. Stat., ch. 92, §§ 25, 26; *Bancroft v. Ives*, 3 Gray, 367; *Loring v. Marsh*, 27 Law Rep. 377; *Wilson v. Fosket*, 6 Met. 404; *Converse v. Wales*, 4 Allen, 512.

⁵ *Sheets v. Grubbs*, 4 Met. (Ky.) 341; *Churchill v. Churchill*, 2 Met. (Ky.) 466.

⁶ 4 Kent, Com. 528, 531. See as to reviving a revoked will by revoking the latter, *Bohanon v. Walcott*, 1 How. (Miss.) 336.

⁷ *Brown v. Brown*, 8 E. & Black. 876, 888; *Wood v. Wood*, L. R. 1 Prob. & Div. 309.

descent and not by purchase. The rule of law is now altered by the statute 3 and 4 Wm. IV. ch. 106, § 3, and the heir, in England, takes in such case under the devise.¹ A devise by a testator of an estate tail to his heir at law, does not affect a descent of the same estate to him in fee as heir.² The difference between the present English law and the Roman law is, that whoever takes as devisee or legatee, takes as purchaser, whereas, by the Roman law, the effect of a will was not to pass the estate of itself, but to designate the person who should take as heir, but who did not take as purchaser.³ But in Massachusetts, a devise to an heir at law, of the same estate which he would take by descent as heir, is simply void.⁴

[*700] *42. A will which has been once revoked by implication, by any of the modes above mentioned, except cancellation, may be revived by a republication of such will. This may be done in various ways. Thus, if one make a valid codicil to such will, recognizing it in any manner as an existing valid one, it will amount to a republication. Or it may be by express republication, as by a re-execution in a form as solemn as that required for its original publication.⁵ So, as has been above stated, the cancellation of a second will may revive a prior uncanceled will. But, by the statute of New York, such will not be the effect unless expressly declared to be so intended by the testator.⁶ The effect of a republication of a will by means of a codicil, is the same as if the will was made anew of that date.⁷

43. It is hardly necessary to add that no one can make another the owner of an estate against his consent by devising it to

¹ Wms. Real Prop. 181; *Whitney v. Whitney*, 14 Mass. 88, 90; *Parsons v. Winslow*, 6 Mass. 169; 4 Kent, Com. 506; *Van Kleeck v. Dutch Church*, 20 Wend. 469; *Willard, Real Est.* 477; *Ellis v. Paige*, 7 Cush. 161; *Sedgwick v. Minot*, 6 Allen, 174; ante, p. *393, *409.

² *Posey v. Budd*, 21 Md. 489.

³ *Kaimes' Tracts*, 122.

⁴ *Sedgwick v. Minor*, 6 Allen, 171.

⁵ 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 174 and 175, and Perkins' note of cases; 6 Cruise, Dig. 114, 116; *Haven v. Foster*, 14 Pick. 534, 543, 544.

⁶ 4 Kent, Com. 532. For the general principle, see 6 Cruise, Dig. 121; 1 Jarm. Wills, 1st Am. ed. 123; Stat. 1 Vict. ch. 26, § 22. A will once revoked, to have effect, must be re-executed, or made effective by codicil. The law of New York, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and Arkansas, is the same. 6 Cruise, Dig. 121, note.

⁷ 6 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 116, n.

him, so that if the devisee named disclaim the devise, it becomes inoperative and goes to the heir. Though it seems to be doubtful, whether a mere parol refusal or disclaimer of a devise will be sufficient to prevent the person named as devisee from subsequently claiming it. The difficulty of doing this by anything short of a deed, grows out of the presumptive vesting of the devised interest in the devisee, before entry.¹ The law presumes an acceptance by a devisee of the devise, if the same is apparently beneficial to him, unless he expressly renounces it. And if he enters upon it, he takes it with all its conditions.²

¹ Co. Lit. 111 a; *Wilkinson v. Leland*, 2 Pet. 627, 655; *Doe v. Smyth*, 6 B. & C. 112; *Townson v. Tickell*, 3 B. & Ald. 31, 36; 4 Kent, Com. 533; *Webster v. Gilman*, 1 Story, 499; *Ex parte Fuller*, 2 Story, 327. That a deed is required, *Bryan v. Hyre*, 1 Rob. (Va.) 94; 6 Cruise, Dig. 134, and Greenl. note. *Pickering v. Pickering*, 6 N. H. 120; *Tole v. Hardy*, 6 Cow. 340.

² *Perry v. Hale*, 44 N. H. 365.

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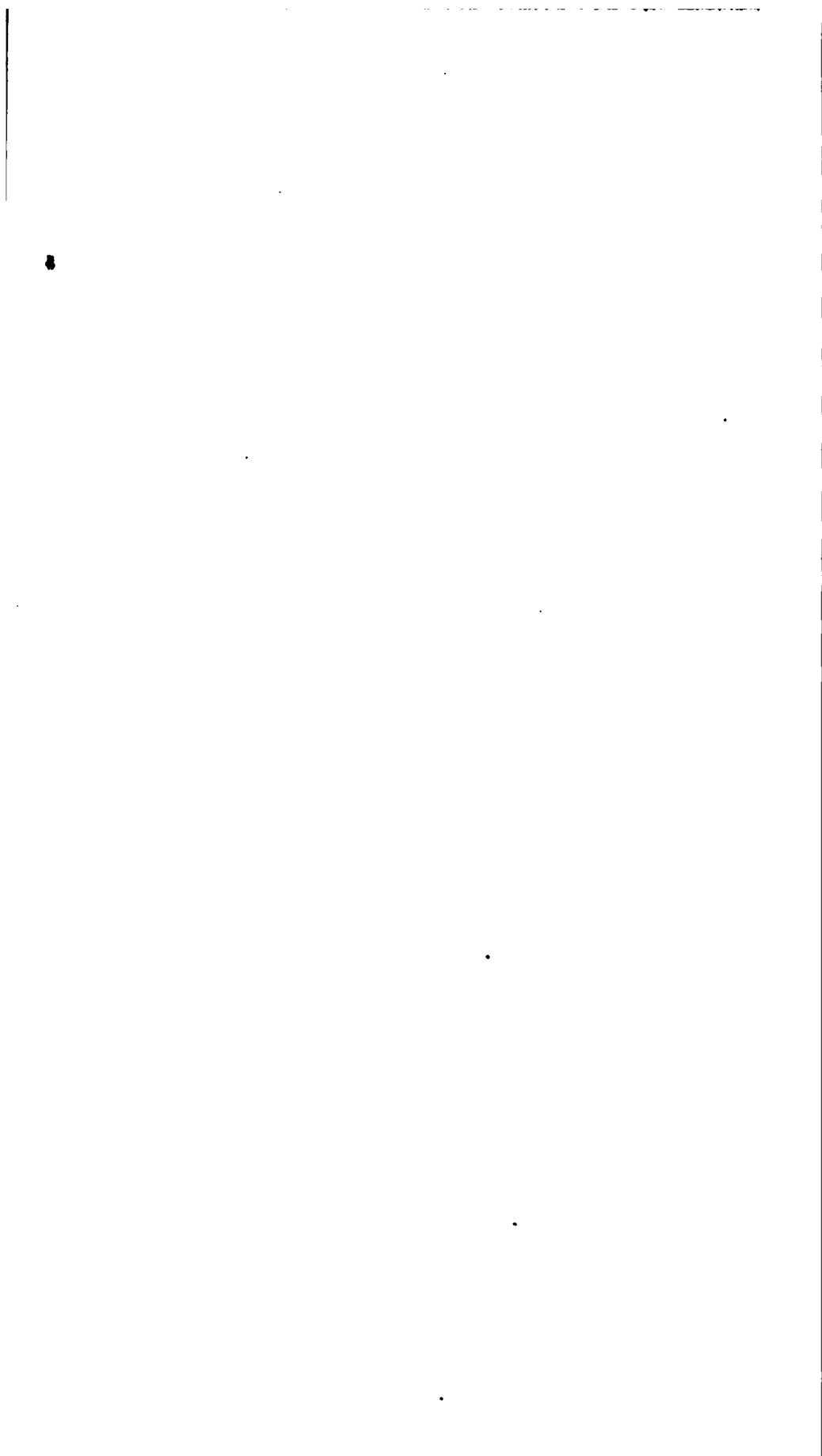
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APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

*IN view of what has been said, from time to time, in the [*701] body of this work, there seems to be a propriety in presenting for the consideration of the reader, the substantial parts of one of the forms of marriage settlement which have, for many years, been in use in England. These have been copied from "Atkinson's Forms of Conveyancing," (p. 428.) Though, by the changes of the law in England, as well as by the statute provisions of many of the States, the occasion for limiting the estate to trustees to preserve contingent remainders is obviated, the form, in that respect, is retained for convenient reference. So the phraseology of the English form is preserved, although much less brief and simple than that usually adopted in similar instruments in this country. The one selected is that employed where the father makes a settlement of a freehold estate in favor of a daughter and her intended husband, with provisions for children of the marriage. And one object in inserting it is to make it an opportunity for showing the application of the doctrine of *uses* in the modes of conveying lands, in raising *springing and shifting uses*, and in creating *powers* and providing for the execution of trusts and the like. With such notes of explanation as are appended, it is hoped it may furthermore serve to furnish hints to guide in framing a class of legal papers which have not, hitherto, been of frequent use in this country. "This," says Judge Kent, "requires the introduction of powers of leasing, selling, exchanging, and charging the lands, and with the reservation of a power to alter and modify the dispositions in the settlement, as exigencies may require. It is done by a general power of appointment in the first instance, or by adding to the limitations a power of revocation and new appointment. Powers are the main-spring of this machinery."¹

¹ 4 Kent, Com. 380.

[*702] *SETTLEMENT ON MARRIAGE

MADE BY THE FATHER OF THE LADY AND THE INTENDED HUSBAND.

(1) This Indenture made, &c., between A. B. [the father] of, &c., of the *first* part, C. D., daughter of said A. B., of the *second* part, E. F., [the intended husband] of, &c. of the *third* part, and J. D. and J. S. of, &c. [the trustees] of the *fourth* part: Whereas a marriage hath been agreed upon, and is intended shortly to be duly had and solemnized between the said C. D. and E. F. ; and, whereas, upon the treaty for said intended marriage, it was agreed that the messuages, lands, and hereditaments hereinafter mentioned, &c., respectively, should be conveyed and settled to the uses, upon and for the trusts, interests, and purposes, and with, under, and subject to the powers, provisos, agreements, and declarations hereinafter expressed and declared of and concerning the same.

(2) *Now this Indenture witnesseth*, that in pursuance and performance of the said agreement on the part of the said A. B., and for the considerations aforesaid, the said A. B. hath granted, bargained, sold, aliened, released, and confirmed, and by these presents, doth, &c., unto the said J. D. and J. S. and their heirs, all that, &c. (estate). To have and to hold the same messuages, lands, and hereditaments, &c., to the said J. D. and J. S., and their heirs, to the uses upon and for the trusts, intents, and purposes, and with, under, and subject to the provisos, agreements, and declarations hereinafter expressed and declared, of and concerning the same.

[*703] *(3) And it is hereby agreed and declared by and between

(1) This part includes the parties to the indenture and the consideration upon which it is entered into. "Trustees are almost always necessary in marriage settlements, and where they are parties, powers for changing them, and clauses for their indemnity, and the reimbursing their expenses, should always be inserted in the settlement." "All persons having any estate or interest in the property to be settled, should be parties to the deed, and all persons intended to be bound by the deed." "It is always proper in marriage settlements to describe the parties fully." "The marriage is alone a sufficient consideration for the settlement where it is executed before marriage, or made in pursuance of articles which were executed before the marriage." 7 Bythew. Conv. 355; 2 Sugd. Pow., 3d Am. ed. 228.

(2) This is called the "*operative part*" of the indenture, whereby the party, who ever he is, conveys, usually, to trustees in the nature of feoffees to use, or as here, by bargain and sale, *habendum* to the intended uses and subject to the powers and trusts prescribed by the parties. In this case, it will be perceived, the legal estate granted is a fee-simple. 7 Bythew. Conv. 354.

(3) This and the following clauses contain the declarations of the uses and trusts
[764]

the said parties to these presents, that the grant, &c., hereinbefore contained, and hereby respectively made as aforesaid, shall operate and enure to the use of the said A. B., his heirs and assigns, till the intended marriage shall be duly had and solemnized, and from and (4) immediately after the solemnization thereof, to the use of the said J. D. and J. S., and the survivor of them, and the executors and administrators of such survivor for and during the natural life of the said C. D. (5) In trust, nevertheless, to collect, get in, and receive the rents, issues, and profits of the said messuages, lands, and hereditaments, as and when the same shall become due and payable, and to pay the same to such person or persons for such estates or interests, intents, and purposes, and in such manner as the said C. D. shall, from time to time, notwithstanding her coverture, by any writing or writings under her hand (but so as not to dispose of or affect the same by way of sale, mortgage, or otherwise, in the way of anticipation), direct or appoint, and (6) in default of such direction or appointment, to pay the same into her own hands for her sole and separate use and benefit, independently and exclusively of her said intended husband, the said E. F., and without being in anywise subject to his debts, control, interference, and engagements, and the receipt of said C. D. or of her appointees, notwithstanding her coverture, to be from time to time a sufficient discharge for the same, (7) and from and *immedi- [*704]

in the indenture. *First*, to the use of the grantor and his heirs till the intended marriage of the daughter. The effect of this is, that if the marriage never takes place, all ulterior uses fail, the use in him never shifts, and he is left, to all practical purposes, the owner of the original estate in fee, the seisin being united with the use limited to him.

(4) *Second*, upon the marriage, the use springs or shifts from the grantor to the trustees themselves, and the seisin granted to them unites with this use, creating a legal estate in them, but being intended for the benefit of the wife, it is limited to them for her life only, and at the same time there is an active trust created in favor of the wife, whereby the legal estate is to remain in the trustees so long as the active trust is to continue. Ante, pp. *186, *187, *283, *286.

(5) This clause defines the trusts in favor of the wife for which the estate is to be thus held, and also gives to her the power of appointing to whose benefit the estate shall be held and the rents thereof paid, with a clause which may or may not be inserted, as the settler may choose, withholding from her the power of anticipating the rents by mortgage or otherwise. *Clancey, Husband and Wife*, 328-330; *Jackson v. Hobhouse*, 2 Meriv. 483. As to the effect of such clause, see *Hill, Trust*. 424.

(6) By this clause the trustees are authorized to pay over the rents to the wife without the control of the husband, or liability on account of his debts, &c.

(7) Upon the decease of the wife in the foregoing settlement, the use in the trustees ceases and shifts to the husband, and this clause limits such use to him during his life, from and after her death, with a provision in case of forfeiture and

ately after the decease of the said C. D., then, in case the said E. F. shall survive her, to the use of the said E. F. and his assigns for and during the term of his natural life, (8) and from and immediately after the determination of that estate by forfeiture or otherwise in his lifetime, then to the use of the said J. D. and J. S. and their heirs. In trust to support the contingent uses and estates hereinafter limited, from being defeated or destroyed, and, for that purpose, to make entries and bring actions as occasion shall require, but, nevertheless, (9) to permit and suffer the said E. F. and his assigns during his life, to receive and take the rents, issues, and profits of the said messuages, lands, and hereditaments, to and for his and their proper use and benefit, and from and immediately after the decease of the survivor of them the said E. F. and C. D., (10) to the use of all and every the child and children of the said C. D. by the said E. F., lawfully to be begotten, who being a son or sons, shall live to attain the age of twenty-one years, or being a daughter or daughters shall live to attain that age or marry, which shall first happen, their heirs and assigns as tenants in common. (11) And in case there shall be no child

to prevent a defeat thereby of the contingent remainder to the children, for a limitation of the estate to the same trustees and their heirs, to support the contingent remainder during the life of the husband.

(8) Is the usual form in which such trust to support contingent remainders may be and formerly was created.

(9) This clause declares the trust in such case for which the trustees are to hold the estate, — in this case it is in favor of the husband or his assigns.

(10) By this clause, immediately upon the death of the husband, the use shifts from the trustees to such child or children of the marriage as the settler may prescribe; in this form, it is limited to such child or children in fee.

(11) This clause is the last of the series of limitations in the settlement by the way of shifting uses, whereby if the husband and wife die, and no child or children of such marriage shall live to attain a vested interest in the premises, the use shifts in favor of the settler or his heirs or assigns in fee. In following the prescribed form, and confining these explanations to what is found there, it is not proposed to anticipate questions which may be raised by particular modes of expression. And yet it seems almost necessary to allude to a series of cases which have recently arisen in the English courts upon the point whether in limitations substantially like that given above, in favor of the children of the marriage, the estate vests in each child successively as soon as born, opening to let in children subsequently born, or whether the vesting is postponed till the child attains the age of twenty-one years, or, if a daughter, is married. Other questions connected with this, as to subsequent limitations, whether they are remainders or executory devises, have also been raised, which it is not necessary to examine here. In *Bromfield v. Crowder*, 1 B. & P. N. S. 313, the limitation was by will to A and B, successively for life, and at the death of the survivor, to C, if he should attain twenty-one, but if he died before that and D survived him, then to D, &c. It was held, that C took a vested fee determinable upon the contingency of his dying under twenty-

or children of the said intended marriage, who shall live to attain a vested interest or vested interests in the *said hereditaments and premises under the provisos aforesaid, then to the use of the said A, B., his heirs and assigns forever. [*706]

one years of age. This seems to be in accordance with *Blanchard v. Blanchard*, 1 Allen, 223. In *Festing v. Allen*, 12 M. & W. 279, the limitation was by will to J. for life, and after her death to the use of all and every the child and children of J. who should attain the age of twenty-one years, and their respective heirs. And for want of such issue, &c., J. married and had three children, and died leaving them all infants. And it was held, that J. had a life estate with a contingent remainder to such of her children as should attain the age of twenty-one, which was defeated by her dying before any of them attained that age. In *Riley v. Garnett*, 3 De Gex & S. 629, the devise was to trustees for the benefit of a married woman for life, after, in trust for all her children who should attain twenty-one years, or, being daughters, should attain that age or marry, and their heirs. It was held, to give vested estates to all her children as they came into being, subject to be divested on their deaths under twenty-one, and, if daughters, unmarried. This was in accordance with the doctrine of the case of *Doe v. Nowell*, 1 M. & S. 327. In *Browne v. Browne*, 3 Smale & G. 568, the devise to the children was to his child or children who should attain twenty-one, as tenants in common in fee, and if only one child, &c., for such child in fee. Held, that upon the tenant for life dying leaving only one child, an infant, he took a vested fee-simple, but liable to be divested upon his dying under age. In re *Mid. Kent Railw. Act*, Johns. Eng. Ch. 357, the limitation was substantially like that in *Riley v. Garnett*, above cited, with a like limitation as in *Browne v. Browne*, if there were only one child; it is left undecided whether the remainders were vested or contingent, after commenting upon *Festing v. Allen*, above cited, and the case of *Doe v. Hopkinson*, 5 Q. B. 223, which the Vice-Chancellor says it is extremely difficult to reconcile with it. The case of *Duffield v. Duffield*, 3 Bligh, n. c. 260, might also be referred to. But it would be extending this note to too great a length to attempt to analyze these and the other related cases, since there could be no hope of arriving at any simple and intelligible rule of general applicability. It may be sufficient to add, that the tendency of late seems to be to hold a limitation like that given in the foregoing form, as creating a vested estate in the children at the times of their birth, as they may successively be born, and to assume that such would be the construction unless varied or controlled, as in *Duffield v. Duffield*, by some peculiar form of expression in the terms creating it. There would, moreover, be an insuperable objection to limiting estates by way of the shifting of uses or execution of powers beyond the period of a life or lives in being, and twenty-one years and a fraction more, because of the rule of law prohibiting perpetuities. 1 Sugd. Pow., 3d Am. ed. 178; ante, *297. Thus, in the present case, the limitations were in effect to the settler in fee, unless the marriage of a daughter then living takes place, then to the daughter and husband for life, then to their children who should attain twenty-one years, in fee. And it is only in case that no child attains that age, that the final limitation over to the settler in fee takes effect, bringing all these limitations clearly within the rule. But inasmuch as it is often desirable to make dispositions of the estate for the benefit of parties contemplated by the settlement, which no mere owner of a life estate could make, nor one having an interest in a

(12) Provided always, and it is hereby agreed and declared, between and by the said parties to these presents, that it shall and may be lawful for the said J. D. and J. S., and the survivor of them, and the executors, administrators, or assigns of such survivor, during the lives of the said E. F. and C. D., and the life of the survivor of them, and also during the minority of any son or sons, or the minority, or until the marriage of any daughter or daughters of the said intended marriage, who shall be entitled to the said messuages, lands, and hereditaments under the limitations hereinbefore contained, but with the consent in writing of the said E. F. and C. D., during their joint lives, or of the survivor of them during his or her life, or at the discretion of the said J. D. and J. S., after the decease of such survivor, to dispose of and convey, by way of absolute sale, all or any part of said messuages, lands, and other hereditaments hereinbefore, &c., and the inheritance thereof in fee-simple, to any person or persons whomsoever, for such price or prices in money, as to them the said J. D. and J. S., or the survivor of them, or the executors or administrators of such survivor, shall seem reasonable, and that (13) for the purpose of effecting such dispositions and conveyances, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said J. D. and J. S., and the survivor of them, and the executors or administrators of such survivor, with such consent and approbation as aforesaid, by any deed or deeds, instrument or instruments in writing, to be by them sealed and delivered in the presence of, and to be attested by witnesses, absolutely to revoke and make void all and every, or any of the uses, trusts, powers, and provisions hereinbefore limited, expressed or declared, of and concerning the same messuages, lands, and other hereditaments respectively, or any part or parts thereof. (14) And by the same or any other deed or [*707] *deeds, instrument or instruments, in writing, to be executed in like manner, and with such consent, or at such discretion as aforesaid, to limit, declare, direct, or appoint any use or uses, estate or estates, trust or trusts of the said messuages, lands, and other hereditaments

contingent remainder therein, clauses are usually inserted in these settlements creating powers of revocation and appointment to new uses by sale, lease, or otherwise, to serve the wants and necessities of families, some of which are as follow in the next clause of the above settlement.

(12) This clause creates a power in the trustees to sell part or all of the estate in fee, subject to such restriction as to the consent of the parties interested, as the settler may see fit to impose.

(13) By this clause, the form of the deed and mode of executing the power may be prescribed.

(14) This clause provides for authorizing the trustees to limit and appoint new uses or estates, or trusts of the premises, in carrying the power of sale into effect

ments, or any part or parts thereof which it shall be thought necessary or expedient to limit, declare, direct, or appoint, in order to effectuate any such sale, disposition or conveyances aforesaid, and also, (15) that upon payment of the money arising by sale of the said messuages, lands, and other hereditaments, or of any part or parts thereof, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said J. D. and J. S., and the survivor of them, and the executors or administrators of such survivor, to sign and give receipts for such money and that such receipts shall be sufficient discharges to the person or persons to whom the same shall be given for the money, in such receipts respectively expressed or acknowledged to be received, and that such person or persons, his, her, or their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, shall not afterwards be answerable or accountable for any loss, misapplication, or non-application of such money, or be obliged or coerced to see to the application thereof.

(16) And it is hereby decreed and declared, that the said J. D. and J. S., or any future trustee or trustees of these presents, shall stand possessed of the money to arise from such sale or sales, in trust, with such consent, or at such discretion as the case may be, as aforesaid, to lay out and invest the same in the purchase of other messuages, lands, and hereditaments, either freehold or leasehold; and shall settle and assure, or cause to be settled and assured, the messuages, lands, and hereditaments, so to be purchased in the names of the said J. D. and J. S., or the survivor of them, or any future trustee or trustees of these presents, to such and the same uses, upon such and the same trusts, to and for such and the same intents and purposes, and with, under, and subject to such and the same powers, provisions, conditions, agreements, and declarations, as are hereinbefore expressed and declared, of and concerning the hereditaments and premises so to be sold, or as near thereto *as the deaths of parties, and other inter- [*708] vening accidents, will then admit of.

(17) Provided, also, and it is hereby agreed and declared between and by the parties to these presents, that it shall and may be lawful to

(15) This clause authorizes the trustees to receive the purchase-money on such sales, relieving the purchaser from liability on account of the application of the purchase-money. As to the law upon this latter point, see *Laussat*, *Fonbl. Eq.* 415 and note; *Field v. Schiffin*, 7 *Johns. Ch.* 150, 160.

(16) This clause provides for the expenditure and application by the trustees of the moneys arising from such sale, by purchasing other lands, &c., and the uses to which the lands thus purchased shall be limited, varying, of course, so as to accomplish the object and intent of the settler.

(17) This clause provides for making leases by the trustees, of the premises, prescribing the mode, length of the term, and the like.

and for the said J. D. and J. S., or any future trustee or trustees of these presents, as aforesaid, during the lives of the said E. F. and C. D., and the life of the survivor of them, and also during the minority of any son or sons, or during the minority, or until marriage of any daughter or daughters of the said intended marriage, who shall be entitled to the said messuages, lands, and hereditaments, under the limitations hereinbefore contained, but with the consent in writing of the said E. F. and C. D. during their joint lives, and of the survivor during his or her life, and at their or his own discretion after the decease of such survivor, and by any deed or deeds, writing or writings, to be by them or him sealed and delivered in the presence of, and to be attested by, &c., to demise and lease, all or any part or parts of the said messuages, lands, and hereditaments, to any person or persons, for any term or number of years absolute, not exceeding, &c., to take effect in possession, and not in reversion, or by way of future interest, so that there be reserved, on every such demise or lease, the best or most improved yearly rent, to be payable during the continuance thereof, to be incidental to the immediate reversion of the hereditaments so to be demised or leased, that can or may be reasonably had or gotten for the same, so that there be contained, in every such lease, all clauses and provisions usual and proper in leases of the like nature.

(18) Provided also, and it is hereby agreed and declared between and by the parties hereto, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said J. D. and J. S., or the survivor of them, or for any future trustee or trustees for the time being of these presents, with such consent, or at such discretion as aforesaid, by any deed or deeds, instrument or instruments in writing, either during the life of the said E. F. and C. D., or the survivor of them, and the minority of any son or sons, or during the minority or until the marriage of any daughter or daughters of the said intended marriage as aforesaid, by sale, mortgage, or other disposition of the whole or any part of the said [*709] messuages, lands, and hereditaments, *to levy and raise any sum or sums of money not exceeding ——— part of the principal share or shares of any such child or children, and to give receipts valid and effectual to the person advancing the same, who shall not be answerable for the application thereof, and do and shall apply the money so to be raised, in or towards the preferment or advancement in the world of the child or children for whom the same shall be respectively raised, as aforesaid.

(18) This clause authorizes the trustees to raise moneys by sale or mortgage of the premises, for the benefit of any of the children, &c., exonerating the person advancing the money, from responsibility as to its application.

[770]

(19) Provided, also, and it is hereby agreed and declared, by and between the said parties to these presents, that if the trustees hereby appointed, or to be appointed as hereinafter mentioned, or either of them, shall die or decline, or become incapable to act in the execution of the trusts hereby created, then, and in such case, and so often as the same shall happen, it shall be lawful to and for the said E. F. and C. D., during their joint lives; and for the survivor of them during his or her life, and after the decease of the survivor for the surviving or continuing trustee, his executors or administrators, by any deed or writing under their or her hands and seals, or hand and seal, and to be attested, &c. to nominate, substitute, and appoint, any person or persons to be a trustee or trustees in the stead of them or either of them so dying, declining, or becoming incapable to act as aforesaid, and that thereupon all the trust estates, moneys, and premises, which shall be then vested in the trustees or trustee so dying, declining, or becoming incapable to act, shall be, with all convenient speed conveyed, assigned, and transferred, unto such new trustees or trustee, either jointly or solely, as occasion shall require, to the same uses and upon and for the same trusts hereinbefore declared, of and concerning the same trust estates, moneys, and premises, or such of *them as shall be then subsisting or capable of taking [*710] effect, and that every such new trustee shall have the same powers, authorities, and discretion, in all respects, in the execution of the trusts hereby created, as if he or they had been originally nominated a trustee or trustees in and by these presents.

(20) Provided, also, and it is hereby further agreed and declared,

(19) This is an important clause, creating a power for supplying trustees upon the death or resignation, &c. of those named in the settlement, prescribing by whom and in what form and manner this may be executed, and providing for a conveyance and assignment of the trust estates to such new trustee or trustees. The language of a writer of authority upon the subject, is: "Every well-drawn deed of settlement and will, creating trusts, which may, by possibility, endure beyond a very short period, contains powers enabling any of the trustees for the time being to relinquish the trust, as well as provisions for supplying, by fresh nominations, the vacancies to be occasioned by the resignation or the death or incapacity of any trustee." (Hill, Trust. 176.) "In framing these powers, the greatest care should be taken to provide for every possible contingency in which a change or new appointment of trustees may become necessary or desirable, so as to obviate the expense and trouble of an application to the court of chancery." (Ibid.) "The instrument of appointment will not, of itself, vest the estate in the trust property in the newly appointed trustee; for that purpose it must be accompanied by a conveyance or assignment of the property to the new trustee, or to him, jointly, with the surviving or continuing trustee, if any." (Ib. 186.)

(20) This is a clause exempting each trustee from responsibility, except for his

[771]

between and by the parties to these presents, that the trustees hereby nominated and appointed, or to be nominated and appointed by virtue of the proviso hereinbefore contained, and each and every of them shall be charged and chargeable respectively, only for such moneys as he or they shall, respectively, actually receive, by virtue of the trusts hereby in them reposed, notwithstanding his or their or any of their giving or signing, or joining in giving or signing, any receipt or receipts for the sake of conformity, and any one or more of them shall not be answerable or accountable, &c., for any loss or damage which may happen in the execution of the aforesaid trusts, or in relation thereunto unless the same shall happen by or through their own wilful default respectively.

(21) Then follows a clause providing for a reimbursement of the trustee's costs, charges, &c., incurred and expended in executing the trust.

(22) Then a clause, wherein the father covenants that he has full power to limit, appoint, grant, &c., the premises to the uses, &c., expressed, and for further assurance, &c. Closing with the usual *in testimony* clause. See also a form in several respects like the foregoing, in 7 Bythewood on Conveyancing, 451, 497.

Stripped of its redundancy of verbiage and reduced to its simple elements, the foregoing settlement amounts to this, namely: the estate is thereby limited, 1st, to the settler himself, the seisin through the trustees being executed to the use in him; 2d, by shifting the use to the trustees themselves, and the seisin is executed to the use in [*711] them, but the gift *being intended to be to the use of the daughter, they become seised as trustees proper, during her life; 3d, at her death, the trust ceasing, the use shifts to the husband for life, and the seisin is executed to the use in him; 4th, a remainder in case of forfeiting his life estate is limited to the same trustees, as trustees to preserve contingent remainders, during the husband's life;

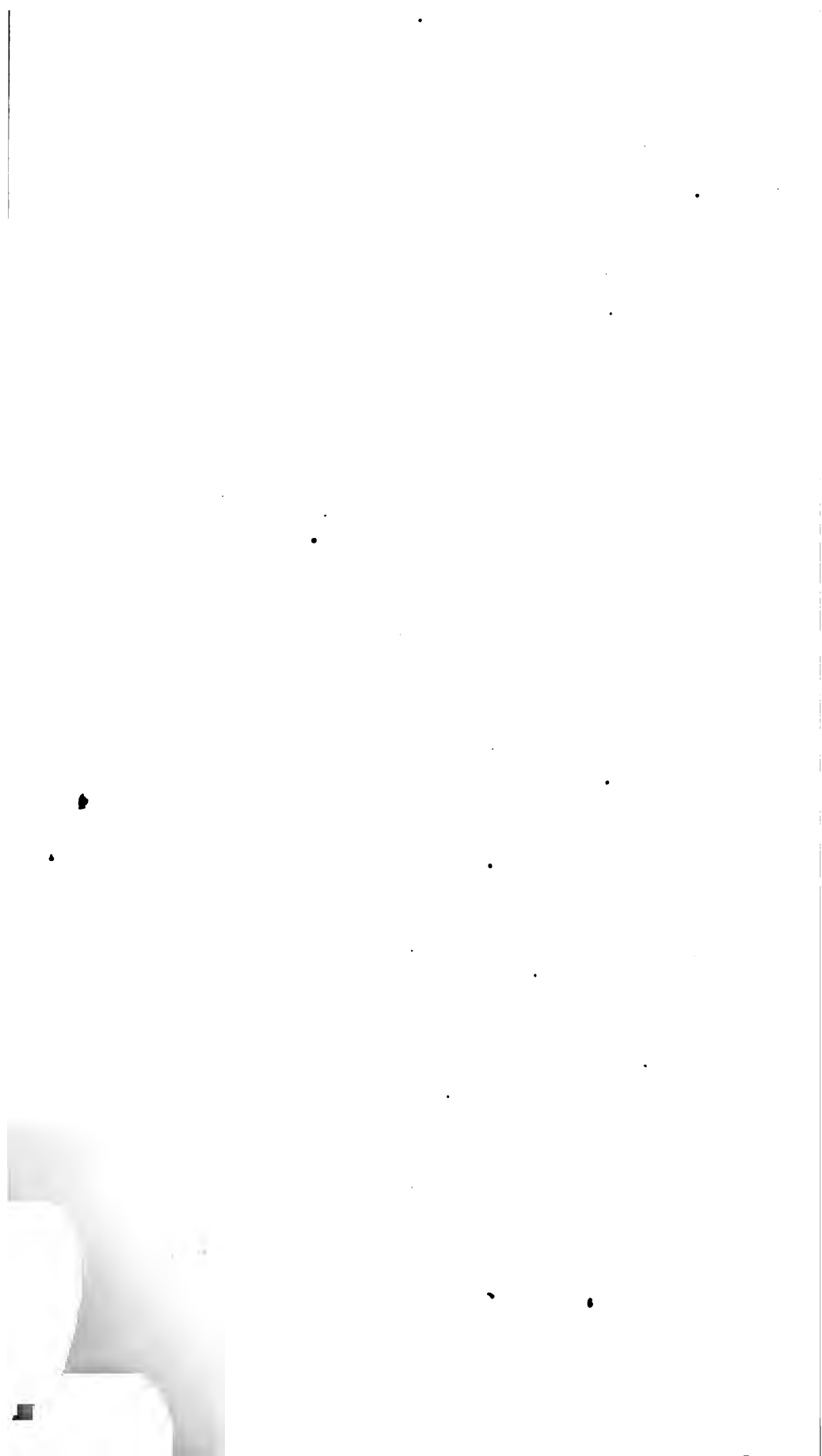
own fault or for what he actually receives, though, for form, he may sign receipts, in the execution of the trusts. (See the law on this subject, ante, p. *207; Hill on Trusts, Am. ed. 309, and note of Am. cases.)

(21, 22) State the usual clauses providing for reimbursing trustees for their costs, &c., and the ordinary covenants for title on the part of the settler. It may be added that, in this country, inasmuch as a trustee may claim compensation for his services, as such, it would seem that the twenty-first in the foregoing form might be omitted. (1 Greenl. Cruise, Dig. 456, note.)

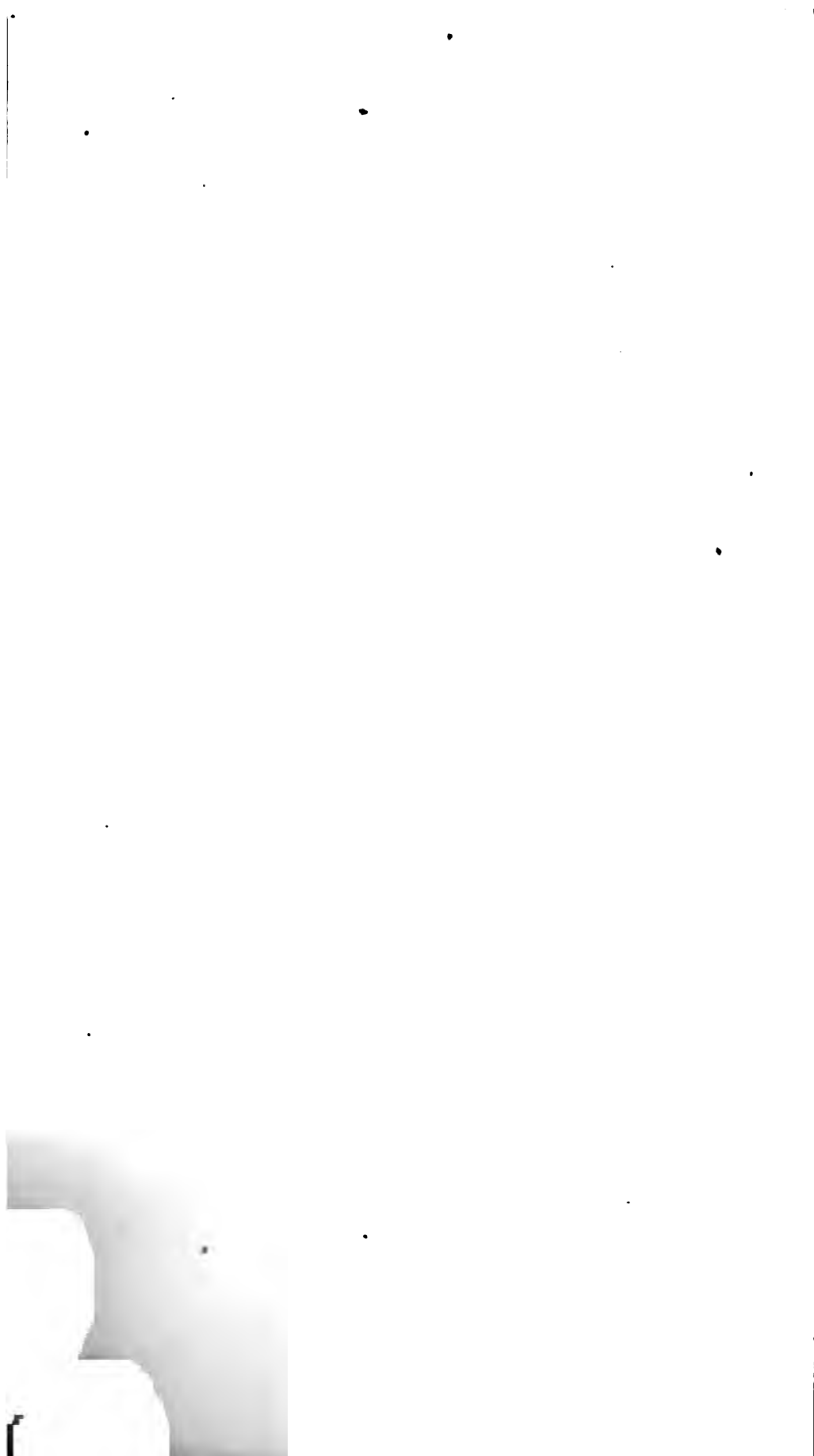
[772]

5th, at his death, the use shifts again to the child or children of the marriage, if any, and the seisin is executed to the use in them, in fee, if they arrive at the age of twenty-one years, or otherwise acquire vested estates in possession ; and 6th, the use shifts again to the settler, if no child takes the fee, and the seisin is executed in him in fee. So far this settlement works a succession of shifting uses. In the next place, it raises and creates the following powers in the trustees named, and to be by them executed, namely : 1st, to sell and pass the estate in fee, and limit and prescribe new uses ; 2d, to collect and reinvest the proceeds of such sale in new estates ; 3d, to make leases of the estate ; 4th, to raise money for minor children, by sale or mortgage of the estate ; and 5th, to appoint new trustees with similar powers and with power to convey the estate to them. And such is the ductile and plastic character of uses when applied to conveyances, that in carrying out the foregoing settlement, the same persons named as trustees are made to play successively the several parts of feoffees to use, active trustees, trustees to preserve contingent remainders, and donees of powers of sale, of revocation and appointment, of leasing, and of creating new trustees with similar and equal powers with their own.

[773]



INDEX.



INDEX.

A.

ABANDONMENT,

- of an easement, what is, ii. 340.
- by what acts done, ii. 314, 316, 340, 341.
- of way, cannot be by parol, ii. 313.
- mere non-user, is not, ii. 312, 340.
- act must be done with intent to abandon, ii. 341.
- may be done by an executed license, ii. 341.
- by alteration of dominant estate, ii. 341 - 343.
- misusing is not abandoning a right, ii. 342.
- how far it can pass a title, iii. 60, 65, 66.

ABATEMENT,

- its effect on wife's right of dower, 202.
- one holding by, may set out dower, 258.

ABEYANCE OF FREEHOLD,

- not allowed by law, 61, 62.
- exception in case of glebe lands, 62.
- none of sovereignty over a territory, iii. 169.

ABORIGINAL TITLE,

- to lands in America, what it was, iii. 164, 168.

ACCELERATION,

- of one estate by failure of a prior one, ii. 505, 650.
- none, if prior one be too remote to be valid, ii. 621.

ACCEPTANCE,

- of lease or deed essential to its validity, 412; iii. 261, 264, 266.
- when presumed by law, 412; iii. 260, 265.
- of rent, when a waiver of forfeiture, 423, 424; ii. 18.
- of rent, when it revives the tenancy, 529, 530.
- of rent after age, affirms infant's lease, 404, n.

ACCESSORY,

- grant of, never carries the principle, iii. 338.

ACCOUNT,

- for what mortgagee is to render, ii. 205 - 207, 210, 211.
- how taken in such case, ii. 205.
- how far he may charge insurance, ii. 212.
- may charge for defending title, ii. 212.

ACCOUNT — Continued.

- When he may charge commission, ii. 217.
- when to allow interest in his account, ii. 217.
- must apply rent in the order of priority of date, ii. 218.
- (See MORTGAGE.)

ACCRETION AND ALLUVION,

- what is, iii. 55, 59.
- belongs to the owner of the land to which it is added, iii. 55.
- is incident to the ownership of the land, iii. 59.
- belongs to the public, if added to a public *quai*, iii. 56.
- who entitled to islands formed in the sea and rivers, iii. 55.
- case of Trustees, &c. v. Dickinson, iii. 56 – 58.
- gain by gradual receding of the sea belongs to what adjoins, iii. 58.
- difference between, and avulsion, iii. 59.

ACCUMULATION,

- devises for, rules as to, ii. 679, 683, 684.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT,

- of deeds, when necessary, and how made, iii. 288.
- how far proof of execution of, iii. 228.
- when certificate of, proves itself, iii. 291.
- how far open to be contradicted, iii. 291.

(See the STATES respectively.)

ACQUIESCENCE,

- of owner requisite to create an easement, ii. 300; iii. 123, 142.

ACTION,

- forms of, for waste done, 137–140, 143, 569.
- to recover rent granted or reserved, ii. 259.
- assumpsit, if reserved by deed poll, ii. 259; iii. 280.
- when debt, assize or ejectment proper, ii. 260.
- when it depends upon privity of estate, ii. 260.
- of covenant, upon leases, 430, 431, 454, 471.
- lies for rent if assigned by itself, 454.
- for obstructing easement, without damage, ii. 339.
- when local and when transitory, 455.
- for rent by several heirs, 454.
- by and against joint tenants, 557, 572.
- by tenants in common, 570, 572.
- by mortgagees for debt and foreclosure, ii. 226 – 228.
- of trespass or ejectment will not lie by States, iii. 172.
- rights in, to land, not the subjects of grant, iii. 303.
- for waste, (see the STATES severally.)

ADMEASUREMENT,

- of lines and points of compass, effect of in deed, iii. 348, 351.

ADVANCEMENT,

- what is, and when applied, iii. 20.
- what is requisite proof of, iii. 20.

(See the several STATES.)



ADULTERY,

in wife, how far it bars dower, 227, 228.

ADVERSE POSSESSION AND ENJOYMENT,

(See USER.)

what sufficient to gain prescription, ii. 495, 499, 500, 501.

must be of something besides a natural right, ii. 298.

done with the knowledge of the land-owner, ii. 299.

without permission of owner, ii. 299.

cannot be of what another does in his own land, ii. 299, 300.

must be with acquiescence of owner, ii. 300.

act of, does not affect reversioner, 113; ii. 303.

tenant estopped to set up against lessor, 114, 483, 486, 491, 585.

so with mortgagor against mortgagee, ii. 158.

so with one tenant in common against another, 566.

tenant cannot have against lessor except after notice, 491, 495.

tenant at sufferance cannot set it up against owner, 586.

nor tenant for life against reversioner, 113.

nor tenant of particular estate against remainder-man, ii. 514.

(See POSSESSION AND LIMITATION, PRESCRIPTION.)

AGE,

at which females may make deeds, iii. 230.

at which make wills, iii. 493.

AID,

prayer of by tenant on him who has the inheritance, 62, 589.

now abolished, 109.

AIR AND LIGHT,

easement of, ii. 276.

how far there may be such, ii. 316 - 318.

ALABAMA,

Advancements, law of, iii. 41.

Alienage, how far in force here, 64.

Accumulation, laws as to, ii. 683.

Attornment, statute of Anne in force, ii. 686.

Conveyances, work no forfeiture, 107.

Contingent remainders, do not exist, ii. 550.

Curtesy, recognized by law, 150.

allowed in equitable estates, 152.

Children, posthumous, how regarded, iii. 44.

illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.

Covenants, in deeds, what are implied, iii. 417.

Damages, to what dowress entitled, 265.

measure of, for breach of warranty, iii. 423.

Deeds, do not require seals, iii. 244.

must be acknowledged, to be evidence, iii. 248.

what constitutes a recording of, iii. 285.

within what time to be recorded, iii. 287.

ALABAMA—*Continued.*

- Deeds*, if recorded, may be used in evidence, iii. 233.
valid as to all having notice, though not recorded, iii. 290.
- Descent*, of estates, *per autre vie*, 109.
laws of as to estates, iii. 21.
- Devise*, of lands, what estate it carries, 75.
whether to be in lieu of dower, 308.
- Divorce*, effect on wife's right to land, 294.
- Distress*, for rent abolished, ii. 256.
- Dower*, an incident of equitable estates, 191.
bound by limitation of three years, 249.
in all lands seized of during coverture, 251.
how set out, 259.
value of in aliened estates, 273, 274.
by what jointure bound, 305.
- Dowress*, to what damages entitled, 265.
- Estates*, *per autre vie*, descent of, 109.
tail, how changed, 99.
- Executions*, how levied, ii. 29.
how levied on estates of mortgagors, ii. 154.
- Freeholds*, *in futuro*, how created, ii. 550.
- Homestead*, in. (See HOMESTEAD.)
- Heirs*, not requisite to create a fee, 41.
- Jointure*, what will bar dower, 305.
- Judgments*, form liens on land, ii. 27.
- Joint tenancies*, how far they exist, 556.
- Leases*, how executed by agents, 395.
what are not within the statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Light and air*, no prescription for, ii. 318.
- Limitation*, of real actions, &c. iii. 148.
what answers to prescription, iii. 53.
what bars dower, 249.
of estates, "upon failure of issue," ii. 682.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 318.
may join with husbands in deeds, iii. 230.
must be examined separately as to deeds, iii. 230.
may make wills, iii. 434.
- Mortgages*, may be proved such by parol, ii. 50.
how assigned, ii. 115.
within what time to be recorded, ii. 137.
how foreclosed, ii. 239.
- Perpetuity*, rules of, ii. 680.
- Purchase-money* a lien on an estate, ii. 92.
- Shelley's case*, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.
- Shores*, of navigable streams not to be granted by U. S., iii. 170.
sovereignty over in the State, iii. 170.
- Widow's quarantine*, what it is, 255.

ALABAMA — Continued.

right to elect, devise, or dower, 308.

Wills, how many witnesses required, iii. 431.

may be made by married women, iii. 434.

ALIEN AND ALIENAGE,

how far a disability to hold land, 63.

could not take or transmit lands, 63.

chiefly removed by statute now, 63, 64 ; iii. 44, 234.

American statutes on the subject, 64 ; iii. 44.

may have dower, 226.

how far entitled to courtesy, 168.

ALIENATION,

right of, incident to a fee, 67.

how and when acquired, 67, 68.

how far it may be restrained, 69.

what amounts to, in its effect on insurance, ii. 315.

by tenant at will determines the estate, 580.

by holder of the freehold under rule in Shelley's case, ii. 557.

mode of, regulated by law of the place of the land, iii. 168.

(See GRANT, DEED, &c.)

ALLEGIANCE,

oath of, not a feudal obligation, 31.

is due to the sovereign only, 31.

land-owners at first became vassals by such oath, 33 n.

ALLODIAL LANDS,

what are, 28.

how far lands are in the United States, 53 - 55.

ALTERATION,

of estate, what will work an abandonment of easement, ii. 341, 342.

in deeds, effect of, and by whom to be explained, iii. 220 - 223.

AMBIGUITY,

latent, explained by parol, iii. 347.

ANCESTOR,

one from whom one inherits, iii. 18.

AND,

when construed *or*, &c. ii. 656 ; iii. 447.

ANDROS,

attempt of to defeat titles of lands, iii. 184.

ANTENUPTIAL AGREEMENT, 301, 304, 305.

(See JOINTURE.)

ANTICIPATION,

restraint of, by wives in settlements, 314.

APPENDANT AND APPURTENANT,

what is, iii. 340.

whatever is, passes with the principal, iii. 340.

powers, what are, ii. 595.

easements, what are, ii. 279.

APPOINTMENT,

under a power, what is, ii. 592.

APPOINTEE,

who is, ii. 592.

APPORTIONMENT,

of charges on lands, 110, 111; ii. 186-189.

of rent, difference between charge and service, ii. 266 n.

of rent between tenant and reversioner, 110, 113, 114.

cannot be made by lessor, without lessee's consent, 454.

between several assignees or heirs of reversioner, 452.

rent not apportionable by time except by statute, 114, 452, 458; ii. 266.

when made upon a partial eviction, 459, 464.

how made between parts of the estate, 452, 459, 461, 464.

made if an easement be partially withheld, 466.

of mortgage debt between widow and reversioner, 111; ii. 196.

(See LEASE, MORTGAGE, &C.)

APPROPRIATION,

of water, effect of, if prior, ii. 322.

APPURTENANT,

easements pass with principal estate, ii. 279, 287; iii. 340-342.

to be, must be for benefit of the estate, ii. 286, 287.

everything that is, passes by grant of the principal, iii. 340.

what are included under, iii. 340.

AQUEDUCT,

right of, how acquired and used, ii. 324.

what passes by a grant of a right to lay, iii. 337.

ARBITRAMENT AND AWARD,

as to title to land estop the parties to it, iii. 111.

ARKANSAS,

Alienage, how far it affects rights of property, 64.

Bargain and sale, a mode of conveyance, ii. 420.

Children, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.

marriages of parents make them legitimate, iii. 42.

of marriages annulled are legitimate, iii. 44.

posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.

Collector's deed, of what *prima facie* evidence, iii. 206.

Covenants, in a deed, by what words created, iii. 417.

Damages, measure of on covenants of warranty, iii. 423.

Descent, rules of, iii. 21.

Deeds, to be evidence, must be acknowledged, iii. 248.

Devise, of lands, what estate created by, 75.

when to be in lieu of dower, 308.

Divorce, effect of on wife's right to land, 292.

Dower, attaches to all seised of, during coverture, 251.

Ejectment, lies upon a mortgage, ii. 101.

ARKANSAS — Continued.

- Estates, per autre vie*, descent of, 109.
- tail, how changed, 99.
- Exchanges*, of lands recognized, 185.
- Executions*, how levied on lands, ii. 30.
- Foreclosure*, judgment for, and for debt at same time, ii. 228.
- Heirs*, not requisite to a fee, by deed, 41.
- Homestead*, in. (See HOMESTEAD.)
- Jointures*, who to be parties to, 300.
- Judgments*, liens on lands, ii. 27.
- Joint*, estates are estates in common, 556.
- tenancies, how far they exist, 556.
- Leases*, how executed by agents, &c. 395.
- what are not within the statute of frauds, 395, 405.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 148.
- Married women*, join with husbands in deeds, iii. 230.
- must be separately examined as to deeds, iii. 230.
- may make wills, iii. 433.
- rights and powers of over property, 318.
- Mortgages*, how foreclosed, ii. 239.
- when they become liens, ii. 137.
- may be proved to be by parol, ii. 51.
- Purchase-money*, vendor has a lien for, ii. 93.
- Partition*, of estates, how made, 599.
- Perpetuity*, rules as to, ii. 680.
- Seal*, a scroll regarded as, iii. 247.
- Widow*, in what her quarantine consists, 255.
- Will*, married women may make, iii. 433.
- marriage and issue revoke, iii. 459.
- what number of witnesses requisite, iii. 430.

ASSENT,

- to a delivery necessary to make a deed valid, iii. 264 – 266.
- when presumed, iii. 261, 264.
- to a deed necessary, to be valid, iii. 261.
- effect of husband's assent to delivery of deed to wife, iii. 266.

ASSIGNEE,

- of mortgage*, has its power of sale, ii. 79.
- can only enforce it for amount due, ii. 125.
- of a second mortgage holds against a prior unrecorded one, ii. 141.
- of lessor or lessee*, bound like assignor, 434.
- when he may sue on covenants, 434, 453.
- what bound to take notice of, 435.
- when not bound unless named, 437.
- for what liable, by privity of estate, 439, 454.
- when he should give notice of the assignment, 455.
- how far a mortgagee or lessee is one, 455, 456.

ASSIGNEE — Continued.

- of insolvent debtor, his rights as to leases, 456, 457.*
- how far liable for rent, 457.*
- when the law presumes a tenant to be, 445, 494.*
- how far one of several can forfeit the lease, 440.*
- has the benefit of covenants, 439.*
- of lessee at will, a tortfeasor, 508.*
- of land charged with rent, liable only while holding it, ii. 259.*
- under Stat. 32 Hen. 8, may recover rent charge, ii. 260.*
- how far that statute applies to fee-farm rents, ii. 260.*
- of rent due, cannot recover in his own name, 418; ii. 264.*

ASSIGNMENT,

- of a mortgage, when held a payment, 213.*
- of the debt secured, when it passes the estate, ii. 118, 119.*
- of premises without the debt, effect of, ii. 113, 114, 115.*
- effect of record in giving notice of, ii. 113, 140, 148.*
- rights under, the same however made, ii. 119.*
- when payment of a mortgage is, 213; ii. 125, 166, 178.*
- what is of a mortgage, and what a discharge, ii. 178, 179.*
- of mortgagor or mortgagee carries their rights, ii. 110.*
- of a lease distinguished from subletting, 434, 444 - 449.*
- how made, effect of mortgage or sale, 443, 444, 455.*
- effect of, under stat. 32 Hen. VIII., 417, 432.*
- of reversion, effect of on covenants, 433.*
- after condition broken, effect of, 416.*
- of covenants in leases, 432, 433.*
- of rent alone, effect of, 454.*
- if made to several, tenant must assent, 454.*
- covenant not to make, how broken, 416.*
- of dower, how made, 254.*

ASSIGNS,

- who are, as distinguished from heirs, iii. 6.*

ASSUMPSIT,

- how far vendee liable in, for occupancy of land, 513.*
- lies for rent reserved by deed poll, ii. 259; iii. 280.*
- would not lie for rent while contract of purchase is open, 515.*
- will not lie for rent where tenant holds by indenture, 515.*
- lies to recover money charged on land, ii. 259; iii. 280.*

ATTESTATION,

- of deeds, when necessary and by how many witnesses, iii. 247, 248.*
- of wills, how many witnesses requisite, iii. 430, 431.*

ATTORNMENT,

- defined, 40.*
- when formerly required, ii. 686.*
- no longer required, 451; ii. 686.*
- necessary, if landlord apportion rent, 454.*

ATTORNMMENT — *Continued.*

- if to adverse claimant, effect of, 489, 490.
- has no effect if fraudulent, 486.
- by it, tenant may be liable to two for rent, 489.
- not necessary, to bind holder of land to pay rent to a grantee of part of it, ii. 266.

ATTORNEY,

- how far wife can make a deed by, 233 ; iii. 233.
- of executing deeds by, iii. 249 – 252.
- what form requisite to bind the principal, iii. 249, 250.
- of towns, &c. may execute deeds in his own name, iii. 251.
- of signing for another in his presence, iii. 252.

AUTRE VIE,

- estates *per*, their character, 102, 104, 107, 108.
- how regulated by statute, 108, 180.
- not subject to dower, 180.

AVULSION,

- what is, iii. 59.
- how soon land annexed by it to another's may become his, iii. 59.
- civil law on the subject, iii. 59 n.

B.**BANKING,**

- right of a franchise, ii. 269.

BARGAIN AND SALE,

- estates for years created by, without entry, 390 ; ii. 395 ; iii. 309, n.
- deed of, in fee, works no forfeiture, 106.
- on what it rests, ii. 365.
- in what States deeds of, in use, ii. 420 ; iii. 311 – 314.
- (*See the STATES severally.*)
- in what it consists, ii. 392.
- what requisite to give validity to, ii. 392, 393 ; iii. 308.
- (*See USES.*)
- consideration for, how far money necessary, iii. 308, 321, 322.
- deed of, may operate as a feoffment, iii. 323.
- when held to create a covenant of title, iii. 413.
- how far freehold *in futuro* may be created by, ii. 386 – 388 ; iii. 323, 325.

BARONS,

- the men or followers of William I., 32.
- how lands divided to them, 32, 34.

BARON AND FEME. (*See HUSBAND AND WIFE.*)**BASE FEE,**

- what is, 67, 77, 78.
- is a subject of dower, 204.
- estate in, not properly a fee-simple, 67 n.

BASE SERVICES.

- what were, 37, 38.
- where they become villein socage, 38.

BENEFICE,

- a gift of lands under the feudal law, 29.

BETTERMENTS,

- by husband on wife's land, are hers, 318.
- by tenant for life, not chargeable to reversioner, 110.

BIRTH,

- what sufficient to give curtesy, 165.
- what requisite to, in Normandy, 165.
- none required in Pennsylvania, 165.
- of a child, effect of on a will made, iii. 19.

BOC,

- applied to lands, what were, 28; iii. 213.
- as a mode of evidence of grant, iii. 213, 214.

BOTES, 115.

(See ESTOVERS.)

BOUNDARIES,

- how far parties estopped by, iii. 81-84.
- by a stream means the *filum aquæ*, iii. 353.
- how this is applied, iii. 354-357.
- rules as to applying in description of premises, iii. 348-363.
- monuments always govern in fixing, iii. 350.

BREACH,

- of covenant of seisin, what is, iii. 390, 391.
- of covenant against incumbrance, what is, iii. 391, 394.
- of warranty, what is, iii. 406.
- of condition of a mortgage to pay in instalments, ii. 166.
- of condition in a lease, how availed of, 421.

BREVIA TESTATA,

- evidences of title like deeds, 45.

BRIDGE,

- franchise of, 20, 21; ii. 268, 271, 272.
- charter for, a contract limiting legislative power, ii. 272, 273.

BUILDINGS,

- what constitutes waste in, 131, 133-136.
- removable by tenant, when, 134.
- when personal and when real estate, 5, 6, 12.
- erected by husband on wife's land, are hers, 318.
- if added by mortgagor held by the mortgage, ii. 148, 157.

BUILDER'S LIEN,

- what it is, ii. 36.
- how far it affects dower, 193.

BURDENS,

- by covenant, run with land, 433; ii. 263.

BURDENS — Continued.

- do not run with land to a stranger, ii. 261, 262.
- of rent, granted out of land, runs with it, ii. 259, 260.

C.**CALIFORNIA,**

- Aliens* may inherit, 64.
- Advancement*, rules as to, iii. 40.
- Abandoning* estates does not pass title to, iii. 65.
- Collector's* deed, what it is evidence of, iii. 206.
- Co-tenants* liable to each other in damages, 558, 591.
- Curtesy*, not allowed here, 150.
- Children*, posthumous rights of, ii. 552.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 22.
- Divorce*, effect of on wife's rights to land, 29.
- Dower*, not allowed here, 173.
- Estates tail*, prohibited, 99.
- Estoppel*, what deeds work one, iii. 99.
- Females*, eighteen years old may make wills, iii. 433.
- Foreclosure*, of mortgages, how affected, ii. 239.
 - who must be parties to, ii. 232.
 - who bound by the process, ii. 232.
 - of suing for, and for the debt, ii. 228.
- Joint estates*, held to be in common, 556.
 - tenancies, how far they exist, 556.
- Judgments*, how far liens, ii. 28.
- Leases*, what not within the statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Legitimate*, what issue are, if marriage annulled, iii. 44.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 157.
 - upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
- Lands*, in, sovereignty over passed to the State, iii. 170.
- Married Women*, must join with husband in deed, iii. 230.
 - may make wills, iii. 433.
 - their rights and powers as to estates, 319.
- Marriage*, revokes a will, iii. 458.
- Minerals*, including gold, belong to land-owner, ii. 351; iii. 170.
- Mortgages*, proved such by parol, ii. 51.
 - convey no estate in lands, ii. 103.
 - how assigned, ii. 113.
 - may be discharged on record, ii. 178.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 239.
- Mortgagee*, has no action at law, ii. 100.
 - when liable on covenants, 456.
 - how his right is barred by time, ii. 172.
- Purchase-money*, a lien for sustained, ii. 88-93.
- Partition* of estates, how made, 600.

CALIFORNIA — Continued.

- Wills*, how many witnesses required, iii. 431.
- marriage revoked, iii. 458.
- females eighteen years old may make, iii. 433.
- Waste*, action for lies, 154.
- Witnesses*, how many required for wills, iii. 433.

CANCELLING,

- lease no surrender, 475.
- of deeds, effect on conveyance of lands, iii. 274, 275.

CAPACITY,

- to take, in case of contingent remainder, ii. 507.

CAVEAT EMPTOR,

- applies to leasing houses, &c. 473.

CERTAIN,

- as applied to feudal services, 37.

CESSION,

- of territory does not affect private rights, iii. 171.

CESTUI QUE TRUST,

- tenant at will of trustee, 512; ii. 489; iii. 144.
- trustee may have action against, 512; ii. 489.
- when he may maintain ejectment, ii. 489.

(See TRUSTS.)

CESTUI QUE USE,

- who was, and his rights, ii. 357.

(See USES.)

- right of widow of, to dower, 189, 298.

CESTUI QUE VIE,

- meaning of, and when applied, 102.

CHAMBER,

- in a house, may be the subject of a fee, 12.
- effect on lease of, if house is destroyed, 473.

CHANCE,

- of life, how calculated, 281, 283.
- when a good equitable jointure, 302.

CHANCELLOR,

- an early officer of the kingdom, ii. 355.

CHANGE,

- in form of mortgage debt, does not discharge the security, ii. 173-175.
- in use of a mill, does not affect the easement, ii; 324.

CHARGE,

- rent, what is, ii. 252.

(See RENT.)

CHARITABLE USES,

- doctrine of, in the United States, iii. 437-443.
- doctrine of perpetuities does not apply to, iii. 442 n.
- cy pres*, doctrine of, how far apply, iii. 437-443.

CHARTERS,

- of franchise, contracts with the legislature, ii. 271.
- subject to eminent domain, ii. 271.

CHATTELS REAL,

- what are such, 14, 60.

CHILD,

- en ventre sa mère*, how far treated as alive, 98, 165, n.
(*See the STATES severally.*)
- actual birth requisite to give curtesy, 165.
- a word of purchase, may be of limitation, ii. 560.

CIVIL LAW,

- rules of property under, 2, 8.

CLASS,

- devise to, opening to others, ii. 514, 546.

CLERICAL CHANCELLORS,

- introduced Roman law, to evade mortmain, ii. 355.

CODICIL,

- effect of, upon an existing will, iii. 460.

COLLATERAL,

- or naked power, what is, ii. 594.
(*See POWERS.*)
- warranty, what is, iii. 408-410.

COLLECTOR'S DEED,

- when covenants in, not personal, iii. 415.
- requisites of, iii. 203-209.
- does not work an estoppel, iii. 206.

COLOR OF TITLE,

- its effect on extent and character of possession, iii. 124, 135-140.

COLONIAL,

- territorial rights of property in the soil, iii. 164-166.

COMMONS,

- their origin, and how used in the management of manors, 34.
- right of not recognized in United States, ii. 250.

COMMON LANDS,

- when corporate property, 18.

COMMON LAW,

- of England, how borrowed, 25, 26.

COMMON RECOVERY, 84.

(*See RECOVERIES.*)

COMMON SOCAGE,

- tenure by, in what it consisted, 37.

COMMON TENANT,

- in, what constitutes and how he holds, 562.
- if joint owners, presumed to be such, 555.
(*See the STATES severally.*)
- how far two disseisors are, 555.

COMMON TENANT — *Continued.*

- when children and heirs are, 562.
- right of each in respect to the estate, 562, 563.
- each can convey, but only by deed, 563.
- neither can convey a part by metes, &c. 564; iii. 285.
- how sale by metes may be made effectual, 565; iii. 235.
- possession of one presumed to be of all, 566.
- one cannot set up title in a stranger against the other, 569.
- each has a separate freehold, 572.
- the shares of each presumed to be equal, 553.
- lease of the common estate the act of each, 405, 565.
- when one liable to the other, in respect to the use of the land, 568, 569, 570.
- when one, a separate owner of a crop, 571.
- effect of one making improvement on the estate, 571.
- action by, for injury to possession, joint, 572.
- action by, to recover freehold, may be separate, 572.
- by what acts one may dispossess the others, 566, 567.
- of the rights growing out of a separate occupancy, 567.
- effect of one buying up an adverse title, 588.
- same rule applies in buying up a tax title, 588.
- how far grantor in deed of partition is a warrantor, 589, 590.
- how far, after partition, one estopped to claim the share of the other, 590.
- effect if one is evicted of the part set out to him in severalty, 590.
- his remedy if evicted of his property, 591.
- laws of States as to partition, 591 — 602.

(See the STATES severally.)

(See PARTITION.)

CONDITIONAL FEE,

- in what it consisted, 77, 82.
- origin of estates tail, 83.

CONDITION,

I. IN LEASES, 414 — 425.

- what incident to terms for years, 414.
- strictly construed and enforced in such cases, 415, 416, 419, 420.
- license to violate it, discharges it wholly, 415.
- breach of, excused if *in invitum*, 416.
- how availed of, if broken, 416.
- rights of assignees as to, under 32 Hen. VIII. ch. 34, 417.
- what may be provided for by, 418.
- effect on the estate of an entry for breach, 419.
- breach of, does not affect lessee's estate till entry made, 419.
- to defeat the estate, must be clause of re-entry, 420.
- by what words, and when condition or covenant, 421.
- what acts must be done to avail of, by entry for breach, 421.
- cannot be apportioned to assignee, 434.

CONDITION — Continued.

what are words of, and what of limitation, ii. 21.
in what part of a deed usually inserted, ii. 379.

II. IN MORTGAGES, 496.

what sufficient to constitute a mortgage, ii. 59–62.
a good one, that the whole shall be due if part is unpaid, ii. 69, 166.
how far good to pay enhanced interest, ii. 69.
for support, &c. rules applicable to, ii. 70.

III. CONDITIONAL ESTATES AT LAW.

what they are, and how defined, ii. 2–8.
what are implied, and what by deed, ii. 3, 10.
what words may make a condition, 482; ii. 3–6, 21.
distinction in this between wills and deeds, ii. 3.
when made so by clause of re-entry, ii. 3–4, 13.
distinction between precedent and subsequent, ii. 5–9.
subsequent, strictly construed, ii. 6.
effect of, if impossible or unlawful, &c. ii. 6; iii. 181.
limiting or restraining conveyance, how far good, ii. 7.
in restraint of marriage, how far good, ii. 7, 8.
if precedent fails, the estate fails, ii. 8.
when to be performed, if no time fixed, ii. 9.
how and when they defeat estates, ii. 10.
right to exercise it, not a subject of grant, iii. 303.
to be enforced only by entry, ii. 11, 13.
who may enforce them, ii. 11–13.
right to enforce lost by grant of reversion, ii. 12, 14.
this right not an estate or a reversion, ii. 12.
right not affected by question of damage, ii. 14.
may be exercised, though other remedies exist, ii. 15.
breach of, where excused, and how waived, ii. 15, 16.
in what cases equity relieves against, ii. 17–19.
what are the qualities of such estates, 79; ii. 1–19.
descend, may be devised or released, ii. 19.
are not within the rules as to perpetuity, ii. 20.
how they differ from conditional limitations, 244; ii. 20–22.
when performed, estate becomes absolute, 79.
how far subject to dower, 204, 240.
to enter and hold land for non-payment of rent, good, ii. 258.
such condition defeated by payment of rent, ii. 258.
right to enter for breach, may be reserved to third parties by uses,
ii. 258.

IV. CONDITIONAL LIMITATIONS,

what are, 77, 419; ii. 20–22, 578–580.
within the rules against perpetuities, ii. 20.
effect on dower in, if defeated, 244.
of the rights of curtesy in land, held by, 158.

CONDITION — *Continued.*

- distinguished from remainders, ii. 504.
- unknown to the common law, ii. 504.
- difference between, and contingent limitation, ii. 580.

CONFISCATION,

- of estates, what and where applied, iii. 188, 189.

CONNECTICUT,

- Alienage*, abolished, 68.
- Attachment*, on mesne process a lien, ii. 29.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Attornment*, Stat. of Anne as to, in force, ii. 686.
- Bargain and sale*, a form of deed in use, ii. 420.
- Curtsey*, recognized here, 148.
 - what seisin necessary to gain it, 160.
 - how it may be forfeited, 168.
- Descent*, rules of, iii. 23.
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689.
- Deed*, what consideration necessary for, iii. 323.
 - two witnesses necessary for, iii. 248.
 - of quitclaim, a conveyance, ii. 103; iii. 313.
 - what amounts to a record of, iii. 285.
 - how far seals to, necessary, iii. 244.
 - delivery of, equivalent to livery of seisin, ii. 411.
- Damages*, rule of in breach of warranty, iii. 423.
- Dower*, extends to what husband died seised of, 252.
 - what constitutes a widow's quarantine, 255.
 - effect on, of divorce, 292.
 - no statute bar to recovery of, 250.
- Ejectment* lies by mortgagee, ii. 101.
- Husband and wife*, joint tenants, 580.
- Jointure*, what bars dower, 304.
 - who are parties to, 263.
- Lands*, tenure of allodial, 54.
- Levy*, of execution on lands, &c. ii. 30, 155.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 149.
 - none as to dower, 250.
- Livery* of seisin formal, not in use, 46.
 - delivery of deeds equivalent to, ii. 411.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
 - Stat. 32 Hen. VIII., c. 34, in force, 432.
- Married* women need not acknowledge deeds separately, 234; iii. 229.
 - may make wills, iii. 493.
 - rights and powers of as to property, 319.
- Mortgages*, how far proved by parol, ii. 51.
 - how assigned, ii. 115.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 243.

CONNECTICUT — Continued.

- Mortgagees*, may charge for services, ii. 217.
- Partition*, how made of common estates, 594.
- Perpetuity*, rules as to, ii. 680.
- Prescription*, fifteen years limits of, ii. 293.
- Shelley's case*, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.
- Seals*, how far dispensed with in deeds, iii. 244.
- Statute* 32 Hen. VIII., c. 34, in force here, 432.
- Uses*, applied in deeds of land, ii. 411.
- Wills*, what witnesses requisite, iii. 480.
 - pass after acquired estates, iii. 432.
- Witnesses*, two required to deeds, iii. 248.
 - how many required for wills, iii. 480.
- Waste*, lies against tenants in dower and curtesy only, 142, 143.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.

CONSANGUINITY,

- what is meant by, iii. 9.
- what lineal and what collateral, iii. 10.

CONSIDERATION,

- in deed, what kinds and what sufficient, ii. 364, 393; iii. 320, 326.
- what requisite in bargain and sale, iii. 320 — 322.
- what in covenant to stand seised, iii. 321.
- why expressed in a deed, ii. 365; iii. 329.
- a deed of gift good without one, iii. 323.
- what it is, may be shown by parol, ii. 406, 410; iii. 324, 326.
- if acknowledged, rebuts resulting use, ii. 398, 406.
- such acknowledgment cannot be contradicted except for fraud, iii. 321, 327.
- how far one different from that expressed, may be proved, iii. 323, 326, 329.

CONSTRUCTION OF DEEDS,

- object of, to ascertain meaning of parties, iii. 333, 349, 350.
- reference is had to state of property when granted, iii. 333.
- the means to attain, with the fruits of the thing granted, ~~pass~~, iii. 335.
- all usual and accustomed ways pass with it, iii. 335.
- what passes by a grant of a mill, mill-site, &c., iii. 336.
- what by grant of "house," "well," "pool," "pit," &c. iii. 336.
- what, by a right to lay a pipe for water, iii. 337.
- principle carries accessory, never the converse, iii. 338.
- grant of a thing carries all its parts, iii. 338.
- grant of land carries every thing on or under it, iii. 338.
- when grant of a parcel, creates a tenancy in common, 564.
- what is a separate grant of mines, iii. 337, 339.
- what is included in appurtenances, iii. 340.
- things properly appurtenant pass with the principal, iii. 341.
- land not appurtenant to land, may pass as parcel, iii. 340 — 342.

CONSTRUCTION OF DEEDS — *Continued.*

- what passes by grant of message, iii. 342.
- no reference had to punctuation of deeds, iii. 343.
- courts reject repugnant parts of description, iii. 343.
- cannot, if it requires a reference to all the parts, iii. 344.
- construed favorably to grantee if doubtful, iii. 343.
- if description fails to show the thing granted, deed void, iii. 344.
- Falsa demonstratio non nocet*, illustrated, iii. 344 – 347.
- how far quantity mentioned, is a description only, iii. 347.
- how far courses and distances are part of description, iii. 348, 349.
- in fixing boundaries, lines, &c. give place to monuments, iii. 348 – 350.
- how far parol evidence allowed to explain deeds, iii. 348, 349.
- competent to show meaning of terms of art, and latent ambiguities, iii. 349.
- may ascertain monuments, but not control them, iii. 363.
- competent to show existing facts when deed made, iii. 349.
- order of giving effect to what is referred to as boundaries, iii. 350.
- a line running northerly, means due north, iii. 351.
- between two monuments always straight, iii. 352.
- from a point to a natural object, always the shortest distance, iii. 352.
- one parcel may be a boundary for another, iii. 352.
- streams, ponds, &c., rules as to, when boundaries, iii. 353 – 355.
- when bounding by great rivers, line goes to *filum aquæ*, iii. 355 – 357.
- rules as to bounding on ponds, iii. 358.
- rule as to shore as a boundary, iii. 359.
- of navigable streams and sea, as boundaries, 358, 359.
- rule as to tide-line as a monument, iii. 359, 360.
- of highways, &c. as boundaries, generally the *filum viæ*, iii. 360 – 363.
- of boundaries having width like walls, ditches, &c. iii. 363.
- bounding on a park, excludes it, iii. 362, n.
- monuments or lines referred to, may be fixed after deed made, iii. 353.
- how far *reputation* competent to fix boundaries, iii. 364 – 366.
- reference in one deed to another, the same as if copied into it, iii. 367.
- “between” two objects, or “from” one “to” another, excludes them, iii. 367.
- lines on a plan referred to in a deed, taken as a part of it, iii. 367.
- effect and application of recitals in deeds, iii. 368.

CONSTRUCTIVE—trust,

- what is, ii. 437, 447.
- possession, what is, iii. 118.

(See TRUSTS.)

CONTINUOUS,

- user necessary to create an easement, ii. 301, 302.
- what constitutes, depends on the nature of the right used, ii. 301, 302.
- how far it must be in the same precise form, ii. 301, 302.
- easements pass with parts of heritage, ii. 288, 289.

CONTINGENT,

- interest in lands, what is, 23.
- limitation distinguished from conditional, ii. 580.

CONTINGENT REMAINDERS, ii. 519.

(See REMAINDERS.)

CONTRIBUTION;

- towards incumbrances how made, 111, 112; ii. 186.
- between joint tenants, 557.
- between tenants in common, 588.
- between tenants for life, &c. and reversioner, 110, 111, 282, 291; ii. 196-198.
- between holders of mortgaged estates, ii. 167, 186, 187.
- of the order of making, between purchasers of mortgaged estates, ii. 187-193.
- depends upon equities of parties being equal, ii. 190.
- mortgagee not affected by questions of, ii. 194, 195.
- mortgagor cannot call on purchaser for, ii. 188.
- by widow of mortgagor, how made, 281, 291; ii. 197, 108.
- by widow of purchaser towards purchase-money, 192.

CONVEYANCE OF LANDS,

(See DEED.)

- how made by the Saxons, 28; iii. 218.
- by modern deeds, does not work a forfeiture, 106.
- passes only what estate grantor has, 106.
- how far restraint of, good as a condition, ii. 7.
- of a greater estate by tenant for life, effect of, 106.
- or by tenant for years, 494.
- originally made by livery or grant, 22.
- to be valid, one must have seisin, 51.
- free power of making, incident to a fee, 68.
- English form now in use a grant, 22; ii. 394.
- what are fraudulent under stat. of Eliz., iii. 295-299.
- what are voluntary, and how far valid, iii. 297-299.
- what void in giving preference to creditors, iii. 298.

COPARCENARY,

- estate in what, 560.
- how distinguished from other joint estates, 560.
- how seised, and to whom descends, 561.
- one may have such with himself, 561.
- effect of conveyance by one, 561.
- release by one to another carries a fee, 561.
- one may devise his estate in, 561.
- partition incident to the estate, 562.
- when children are tenants in common, 562.
- suit against tenants for land a joint one, 561.

COPYHOLD ESTATES,

their origin, 39.

of dower in, 175.

CORODIES,

not known to the American law, ii. 250.

CORPOREAL HEREDITAMENTS,

what are, 21.

they lie in livery instead of grant, 22.

originally passed only by livery of seisin, 22.

now pass by English statute, by grant, 22.

CORPOREAL PROPERTY,

what is, ii. 248.

CORPORATION,

may hold lands, 64.

restraint as to, in England, 65.

may take a fee without words of inheritance, 73.

may make leases, 404.

when shares in their stock are personal, 13.

when shares in, are real, 13, 194.

how far proprietors of common lands are, 13.

cannot be joint tenants, 554.

may be tenants in common, 554.

how far parson a sole corporator as to glebe lands, 73.

may be trustee or *cestui que trust*, ii. 482.

how to make deeds, iii. 238.

effect if their lands exceed in value the sum prescribed in their charter, iii. 240.

where deed to, must be to successors to create a fee, 73.

CORRUPTION,

of blood, not in force in the United States, iii. 47.

COSTS,

in actions of dower, 267.

in suits to redeem mortgages, ii. 169.

COVENANT,

I. IN GENERAL,

in deed and in law, 412, 426 - 431.

what run with land, 431 - 438, 469; ii. 263, 264.

it requires privity of estate, ii. 262 - 264.

to pay rent, runs as a burden and as a benefit, ii. 257, 260, 261.

rule as to running with land, whether granted or reserved, ii. 261.

how far one bound by, without signing an instrument, ii. 279, 280.

to stand seised, as a conveyance, what it is, ii. 392, 393, iii. 308.

(See Uses.)

requires a consideration of relationship, iii. 308, 323, 324.

how far proved by parol, though not stated in deed, iii. 324.

by executors, &c. in deeds bind them personally, iii. 415.

COVENANT — *Continued.*

II. IN LEASES,

- strictly construed, 416.
- express and implied, in law and in deed, 426–430.
- when words are a condition, and when covenant, 420, 421.
- what words make implied, 426.
- when that of quiet enjoyment is implied, 427.
- how far this covenant extends, 427.
- implied in, to use premises well, 429.
- none implied that premises are fit for use, 472.
- what are assignable, by stat. 32 Hen. VIII., 431, 432.
- what run with the estate, 433, 435, 437, 467.
- not assignable, if collateral, 433.
- not assignable after breach, 434.
- how far divisible with parts of the estate, 438.
- how far liability on depends on privity of estate, 439.
- how far created by recitals in leases, 435.
- express, as to use of land, &c. demised, 440.
- effect of express, on the part of lessee to rebuild, 440, 441.
- effect of express, to surrender in good condition, 441, 467.
- express, not discharged by damage to or loss of premises, 466.
- express, to pay rent, unaffected by the other covenants, 468.
- other than for rent, not affected by partial eviction, 459.
- effect upon, of destruction of the premises, 466.
- express, to repair, when to be performed, 467.
- to pay rent, suspended by partial eviction by lessor, 461, 465.
- effect of, to make, and making insurance, 468.
- to repair by lessee strictly construed, 471.
- to repair, to what it extends, 471.
- to repair, what is excepted by “wear and tear,” 471.
- when actions upon those implied lie, 430.
- when action on, for rent, lies against assignee, 454, 455.
- when action on for rent is local, 455.
- when for rent, tenant can recover for breach of other covenants, 459.

III. OF TITLE IN DEEDS,

1. are express or implied, and what implied, iii. 380, 381, 411–417.
 - what express ones in use in this country, iii. 381.
 - what in use in English deeds, iii. 381.
 - what are in *presenti* and what in *futuro*, iii. 382.
 - those in *presenti* do not run with the land, iii. 382, 383, 386.
 - when broken, do not run with the land, iii. 382, 389.
2. how far that of seisin runs with the land, iii. 383–389.
 - diversity of rules as to doctrine of covenant of seisin, iii. 383–389.
 - how far having possession sustains the covenant, iii. 385–388.
 - distinction between, and of an indefeasible estate, iii. 388, 389.
 - what constitutes a breach of seisin, iii. 390, 391.

COVENANT — *Continued.*

3. when covenant against incumbrance is *in presenti*, ii. 391.
 how far grantee of covenantee may avail of the covenant, iii. 392, 394.
 what is an incumbrance within this covenant, iii. 393.
 what rule applies, if it first causes injury to grantee of covenantee, iii. 395–397.
4. covenant of warranty the broadest and of most general use, iii. 396.
 operates a conveyance of land by estoppel, iii. 397–407.
 a substitute for feudal warranty, iii. 398.
 is a personal one, and how barred, iii. 399, 400.
 answers to that for quiet enjoyment, iii. 398.
 runs with the land, and by whom sued, iii. 399, 400.
 susceptible of division by division of the lands, iii. 400, 401.
 what seisin of warrantor sufficient to carry the covenant, iii. 382.
 if made to mortgagee, enures to mortgagee, ii. 159.
 who can sue on such covenant, and who discharge it, iii. 400, 402.
 what amounts to a breach of such covenant, iii. 403, 405, 406.
 how far this may be limited and qualified, iii. 404.
 effect of eviction on covenant of warranty and of quiet enjoyment, iii. 406.
 covenant for further assurance, what, iii. 406.
 effect of covenant of warranty as a rebutter, iii. 408.
 what words create an implied covenant in deeds, iii. 411–413, 416.
 express and implied in same deed, how applied, iii. 412–417.
 how far express, limited by exceptions, iii. 414–416.
 no implied covenants in New York, iii. 416.
 in what States they are recognized, iii. 416, 417.
 (*See the STATES severally.*)
 how far reference to quantity of land a covenant, iii. 417.
 damage recoverable in different States in suits on, iii. 418–423.
 for breach of covenant of seisin, iii. 419, 422.
 for breach of that against incumbrances, iii. 421–422.
 for breach of that of warranty, iii. 422, 423.
 (*See the STATES severally.*)
 may estop grantor to claim against heirs, iii. 381.
 to grantee and heirs does not create a fee, iii. 381.

COVERTURE,

- estate during, what is, 311.
- rights of husband in, 312.
- seisin of, whether joint or several, 312.
- effect on wife's right, of husband's disseisin, 166, 167, 312.
- how far affected by act of wife, 313.
- separate estate of wife in equity, 313.

(*See ENTIRETY, MARRIED WOMEN.*)

CROPS,

growing, when regarded real and when personal estate, 5, 6; iii. 339.
property in, when raised upon shares, 497-500.

CULTIVATING,

land, when an act of waste, 131.

CURTESY,

estate by, what it is, 148, 149, 166, 169.

its origin, 149.

incident to estates in fee, 75, 95, 149, 156.

adopted in this country, 150.

(See the STATES severally.)

what requisite to such an estate, 151, 154, 164-166.

in what estates enjoyed, 151, 152; ii. 157.

when allowed in money, 156.

may be had in a rent, ii. 7.

in conditional and determinable fees, 153, 155-158.

lost, if conditional estate is defeated, 154, 156.

when had in separate estate of wife, 155.

none in joint tenancy, 159.

may be in estates in common, 161.

estate by, like that of descent, 159, 167.

what seisin, sufficient to give it, 159, 160, 163.

when ownership of estate sufficient, 161.

none in reversion of the freehold, 161.

none in estate of trustee, 163.

effect on, of prior estate and reversion uniting in wife, 163, 164.

when said to be consummate, 169.

how far seisin of husband and wife is one, 166, 167.

is subject to husband's debts, 167.

how right to, forfeited or lost, 168.

effect on, of conveyance in fee by husband, 168, 169.

how far wife affected by disseisin of husband, 166, 167.

CUSTOM,

distinguished from prescription, ii. 338.

rights by, belong to neighborhoods, ii. 338.

cannot extend to *profits à prendre*, ii. 338, 339.

CY PRES,

doctrine of, applied to wills and powers, iii. 437, 442.

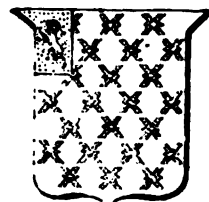
how far adopted in United States, iii. 437-443.

D.**DAMAGES,**

for land taken, when mortgagor may claim, ii. 155.

when mortgagee may claim, ii. 155.

none necessary to an action for injury to easement, ii. 339.



LINCOLN'S INN
LIBRARY.

DAMAGES — *Continued.*

- recoverable in actions of waste, 137.
- what, recoverable in actions of dower, 260, 264–267.
- none at common law in real actions, 260, 264.
- what recoverable in actions of covenant, iii. 418, 423.

DEATH,

- effect of, upon gaining an easement by user, ii. 305.
- suspends the effect during minority of the heir, ii. 305, 306.
- no disability arising after ancestor's death affects it, ii. 360.
- a natural, only recognized now, 225.

DEDICATION,

- in what it consists, iii. 70.
- depends upon the doctrine of estoppel, iii. 70.
- does not depend upon length of enjoyment, iii. 71.
- public take it in the condition in which it is, iii. 70.

DE DONIS,

- statute of, 82–84.

(See ESTATES TAIL.)

DEEDS,**I. IN GENERAL,**

- how far required at common law, 45; iii. 213–215.
- required by statute to convey a freehold, 105, 549, iii. 214.
- what kinds of property require deeds, ii. 663; iii. 300–303.
- what constitutes a deed, iii. 216–218.
- distinction between indentures and deeds poll, iii. 278.
- to be valid, requires seisin in the grantor, 51; iii. 293–295.
- exceptions to this rule, iii. 295.
- requisites to bar dower, 231.
- requisite to pass remainders, reversions, ways, and rents, iii. 301.
- whatever requires one to create, requires to convey, iii. 301.
- surrenders or revocations of grants require, iii. 302.
- possibility, when not the subject of, iii. 302, 303.
- what a sufficient interest in land to be subject of grant, iii. 303.
- mere right or title in action, not the subject of, iii. 303.
- discovery of an ancient Egyptian, iii. 218.
- of confirmation, effect of, iii. 278.
- surrender or cancelling of, effect of, iii. 273–275.
- how far effectual by relation, iii. 276.
- loss of, effect of on the estate, iii. 223.
- alteration, effect of on the estate, iii. 223.
- what deeds are fraudulent and voluntary, iii. 295–299.
- on what material to be written, iii. 217.
- conveys only such estate as grantor has, 106.
- with covenant of warranty, may pass after-acquired title, by estoppel, 399; iii. 98, 110.
- if obtained by duress, it may be avoided, iii. 234.

DEEDS—*Continued.*

- such title good in *bond fide* purchaser's hands, iii. 299.
- when deeds are good by relation, iii. 276, 278.
- how far conveyance to one not *in esse* good, iii. 289.
- limited powers of tenants in common to convey lands, 564; iii. 285.
- effect of notice of unrecorded deed, iii. 289, 290.
- how far reference to other deeds is notice of their contents, iii. 292.
- nature and character of deed of feoffment, iii. 305, 306.
 - of deeds of grant, bargain, and sale, iii. 307, 308.
 - of covenant to stand seised, iii. 308.
 - of lease and release, and release and quitclaim, iii. 308.
- deeds intended as one, held to be another to give effect, iii. 310.
- deeds in New England, poll; in many States, indentures, iii. 316.
- made on Sunday, good in Ohio, iii. 295.
- what deeds in use at common law, iii. 304.
- what deeds under statute of uses, iii. 307.
- what in use in United States, iii. 311, 314.

II. OF PARTIES TO,

- who may make, iii. 224.
- effect, if part only of grantees can take, iii. 241.
- void and voidable on account of capacity of maker, iii. 224, 225.
- by *femes covert*, when void or valid, iii. 224, 227–231.
- good in Illinois and Minnesota, if wife eighteen years of age, 231; iii. 230.
- good in Maine, if wife of any age, 317.
- how executed by, so as to be valid, iii. 227–232.
- good, if husband has abjured the realm, iii. 231.
- may estop herself by deed with warranty, iii. 234.
- how far she may execute one separate from husband, iii. 229.
- how one can convey to the other, iii. 234.
- of husband and wife, of her land, 317; iii. 231.
- of infant, how far valid, iii. 225.
- how his deed avoided, 401.
- within what time and where, 403.
- what amounts to affirmance of, 403.
- of persons of non-sane memory, iii. 225–227.
- deeds by and to aliens, iii. 234.
- most persons competent to take by, iii. 240.
- how far restrained by laws of mortmain, iii. 240.
- deed in *præsentia* to one not ascertained, iii. 240.
- names of grantors and grantees requisite in deeds, iii. 236–239.
- object of, and how indicated, ii. 588.
- grantor estopped to deny the one used by him, iii. 238.
- effect of omitting part of Christian name, iii. 239.

III. EXECUTION OF,

- how to be executed, 317; iii. 243–249.
- writing of, must be complete before delivery, iii. 218.

DEEDS — *Continued.*

- good grammar or handwriting not essential, iii. 218.
- effect of making erasures, &c. in, iii. 220 – 223.
- on whom, to explain these, iii. 221 – 223.
- how to be noticed in executing, iii. 223.
- have no effect on title, if after delivery, iii. 223.
- how far signing essential to, iii. 243, 244.
- sealing essential to, and when first used, iii. 243 – 245.
- calling it a deed without a seal does not make it so, iii. 245.
- if annexed it makes one, though not mentioned as such, iii. 245.
- what is, and mode of affixing a seal — of scrolls, iii. 245 – 247.
- how far corporate seal essential to their deed, iii. 246.
- how deeds by corporations to be made, iii. 236.
- requisites of, in a sale of lands for taxes, iii. 204 – 208.
- execution of, by attorney, iii. 249 – 252.
- signing by one for another in his presence, iii. 252.
- how far *feme covert* can execute by attorney, iii. 232, 233.
- of witnesses, when required, and how many, iii. 247, 248.
- how far reading of deed requisite, iii. 252, 253.
- of date of the deed, iii. 253.
- delivery an essential requisite, iii. 254.
- what makes a sufficient delivery, iii. 254 – 267.
- when to a third person sufficient, iii. 259 – 261.
- when made good by subsequent assent, iii. 259, 261.
- must be done in life of grantor, iii. 263.
- grantee must accept to make a good delivery, iii. 264, 266.
- when an acceptance presumed, iii. 261, 263, 265.
- if in grantee's hands, delivery presumed, iii. 263.
- how far recording evidence of delivery, iii. 264.
- when delivered as an escrow, iii. 267, 272.
- not, though to a third person, if unconditional, iii. 268.
- not, if delivered to grantee himself unless for another, iii. 267, 268.
- escrow of no effect till condition performed, iii. 270 – 272.
- when it takes effect by relation to first delivery, iii. 273.
- holder of, the agent of grantor and grantee, iii. 272.
- effect of re-delivery and cancelling deeds, and making new ones, iii. 273 – 275.
- of registration of deeds, iii. 280 – 288.
- (See REGISTRATION.)
- what requisite, to have effect, iii. 286.
- when necessary to be acknowledged, iii. 287, 288.
- (See the STATES severally.)
- how far wife must acknowledge it to be valid, iii. 228 – 231.
- within what time registration to be made, iii. 286, 287.
- when delivered and recorded, passes a seisin, 49; iii. 121, 276.
- no livery of seisin now required to pass title, iii. 276.

DEEDS — Continued.**IV. COMPONENT PART OF, iii. 316 – 318.**

1. *Tenendum* not in use now, iii. 318.
2. *Premises* of deed, all prior to the *habendum*, iii. 318.
 often used for the thing granted, iii. 371.
 deed may be good if containing a grant only, iii. 318.
 words of grant may be supplied by *habendum*, iii. 319.
 effect of discrepancy between grant and *habendum*, iii. 319.
 what are sufficient granting words, iii. 329, 331.
 “alien,” sufficient to pass a reversion, iii. 331.
 “*dedi et concessi*,” a grant, gift, or surrender, iii. 331.
 “release” may avail as a grant or surrender, iii. 331.
 common to annex the words of limitation to the grant, iii. 331.
 how far consideration necessary in a deed, ii. 363, 364, 398, 406; iii. 320 – 323.
 deed may be good without one, iii. 323.
 why acknowledgment of, inserted in deed, ii. 364, 406.
 description of the thing granted, iii. 331 – 367.
 (See CONSTRUCTION, &c.)
 how far courts authorized to reform deeds, and correct mistakes, iii. 331, 332.
3. *Exceptions* in deeds, what and how applied, iii. 369 – 371.
 often used when reservation is meant, iii. 369, 375.
 what belongs to, as an incident, iii. 371.
 when words of inheritance should be used in, iii. 371.
4. *Habendum*, what is, and its effect, iii. 372 – 375.
 How far words of grant qualified by, iii. 372, 373.
 it yields, if repugnant to the grant, iii. 374.
 title deeds, no clause here as to possession of, iii. 375.
5. *Reservation*, what it is and how used, iii. 375 – 378.
 must be made to the grantor himself, iii. 377.
 must be out of the estate granted, iii. 378.
 may have effect of a grant from grantee to grantor, iii. 378.
 proper place for conditions in deed, iii. 379.

DEFEASANCE,

- what sufficient to create a mortgage, ii. 45, 46, 60, 61.
- if not under seal it is an equitable mortgage, ii. 58.
- if part of original agreement, though not of same date as deed, ii. 60, 61.
- must be made to the grantor, ii. 65.
- when necessary to be recorded, ii. 47, 66.
- of no avail against parties without notice, ii. 66.

(See MORTGAGE.)

DEFINITION,

- of terms given by parties to instruments binding, iii. 349.

DELAWARE,

- Alienage*, law of, 63.
- Attorney*, married woman cannot make, iii. 233.

DELAWARE — *Continued.*

- Bargain and Sale*, in use for deed, ii. 420.
- Crops*, custom of tenants as to, 123.
- Curtsey*, recognized by law, 150.
 - how forfeited, 168.
- Children*, posthumous laws as to, iii. 44.
- Covenants*, what words imply, in deeds, iii. 416.
- Descent*, laws as to, iii. 23
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689; iii. 14.
- Deed*, in what time to be recorded, iii. 288.
 - how many witnesses required for, iii. 248.
- Devisee*, a church may not be, iii. 435.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Dower*, is of all husband was seised of, 251.
 - a claim paramount to creditors, 239.
- Dowress*, what damage entitled to, 265.
- Divorce*, effect of upon wife's right to land, 294.
- Elegit*, writ of, in force, ii. 27.
- Execution*, levy of, ii. 34.
- Estates tail*, how barred, 99.
- Fires*, statute of Anne as to, in force, 136.
- Jointures*, who must be parties to, 300.
- Joint estates*, are held in common, 556.
- Joint tenancies*, how far exist, 556.
- Leases*, what not within stat. of frauds, 395, 531.
 - what must be recorded, 410.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 149.
- Married women*, join with husband in deeds, iii. 230.
 - cannot make attorneys, iii. 233.
- Mortgages*, when they become liens, ii. 137.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 244.
- Partition*, how made of estates, 602.
- Statute of Merton*, in force here, 267.
 - of Anne as to fires, in force, 136.
- Scroll* a sufficient seal, iii. 247.
- Waste*, action for form of, 138, 143, 145.
- Wills*, how many witnesses required, iii. 431.
- Witnesses*, two required for deeds, iii. 248.

DELEGATUS NON POTEST DELEGARE,

- how applied, ii. 613.

DELIVERY,

- of deed essential to it, iii. 254.
- what makes a sufficient one, iii. 254 — 267.
- when made to a third party, good, iii. 259 — 261.
- and record of, equivalent to livery of seisin, 49; iii. 276.

DEMAND,

- of rent and notice by mortgage, equivalent to entry, ii. 131, 132.

DEMAND — *Continued.*

- necessary to an action of dower, 261.
- how to be made, 261.
- what sufficient to avail of condition in lease, 421, 422.
- of rent, what necessary to enforce on land, ii. 258.

DEMISE,

- used in creating terms, 396.
- distinction between, and contract for one, 397.
- effect of, when lessor has no estate, 399.
- when it implies a covenant, and of what, 426 – 429.

DEPASTURING CATTLE,

- right of, may be gained as an easement, ii. 299.

DERAIGN THE WARRANTY,

- what it is, 589.

DESCENT,

- what is meant by in law, iii. 6.
- heir always appointed by law, iii. 6.
- by the Roman law might be made such, iii. 13.
- used in distinction from assigns, iii. 6.
- is an incident to estates in fee, 75.
- can be none of a living person, iii. 6.
- that and purchase the modes of acquiring title, iii. 5.
- the law casts title upon heir passively, iii. 6.
- course of, in estates tail, 94, 96.
- history of the law of, 82 ; iii. 7, 8.
- Lord Hale's canons of, ii. 7, 10 – 12.
- the *lex rei sitæ* at death of ancestor, governs, iii. 16.
- variance of the laws in the Colonies, iii. 8, 9.
- distinction between lineal and collateral, iii. 9, 10.
- what is consanguinity, iii. 9.
- what is meant by *stirps* or *stipes*, iii. 9.
- computed numbers of one's relations, iii. 10.
- civil and common-law modes of computing degrees of kindred, iii. 10.
- what included under lands, in rules of descent, iii. 12.
- of descent and devise of terms, 502.
- 118 Novel, the basis of American law of, iii. 12, 15.
- different laws of States as to taking *per capita* and *per stirpes*, iii. 13.
- application of *scisina facit stipitem*, iii. 14.
- of descent of and through reversions, iii. 13.
- sale or devise of, creates a new *stirps*, iii. 13.
- necessity of seisin changed in United States, iii. 14.
- estates ascend lineally, rather than go to collateral heirs, iii. 14.
- rules as to limit of descent to collaterals, iii. 14, 15.
- different rules as to descent to whole and half blood, iii. 15, 16.
- where a father is of the blood of his daughter, iii. 16.
- rule as to posthumous children inheriting, iii. 16.

DESCENT — *Continued.*

- rules as to illegitimate children being heirs, iii. 16.
- rules as to descent to and from aliens, iii. 17.
- where a child takes his parent's share in the grandfather's estate, iii. 17.
- heir takes as such, though named as devisee, iii. 17, 18.
- lands presumed to descend, till devise proved, iii. 18.
- ancestor — one from whom an estate is inherited, iii. 18.
- rights of a child as heir, if omitted in a will, iii. 18, 19.
- heirs take subject to debts, marshalling assets, iii. 19.
- descent by the rule in Shelley's case, 93.
- descent of public lands "located," iii. 20.
- descent of right to defeat estate upon condition, iii. 20.
- descent of rents of lands leased in fee, iii. 20.
- doctrine of advancements in descents, iii. 20.
- descent cast, how effected, now abolished, iii. 120.
- American Statutes of descent, iii. 21 — 45.

(*See the STATES severally.*)

DESTINATION DU PÈRE DE FAMILLE,

- its meaning and effect, iii. 291.
- may apply, though parcels do not join, iii. 292.

DESTRUCTION,

- of leased premises, its effect on rent, 440, 441, 473.
- how far it affects tenant's title, 473.
- of a deed, effect of on the title, iii. 273 — 275.

DETERMINABLE FEE,

- what is, 77, 88.
- how far it has the qualities of a fee-simple, 78, 79.
- how it may become a fee-absolute, 79.
- husband's curtesy in, 153.
- of wife's dower in, 203, 204.

DETINUE OF CHARTERS,

- when a bar of dower, 226.

DEVISEE,

- how far he may call on the personal, to pay a mortgage, ii. 185, 186.
- his right to enter for condition broken, ii. 11, 12.

DEVISE OF LANDS,

- when first allowed, 44, 70; ii. 365.
- may create a fee without "heirs," 74; iii. 448, 449.
- how far it passes mortgages, ii. 133.
- of part of a rent, how devisee to sue, 454.
- of terms for years, 502.
- to executors to pay debts, effect of, 162, 181; ii. 614; iii. 448.
- of the use of a thing, carries the thing, ii. 673.
- to a class opening to let in others, ii. 511, 546.
- on condition, how construed, ii. 8, 9.
- of wild lands, carries a seisin and fee, 48; iii. 449.

DEVISE OF LANDS—Continued.

- if to heirs, of the same estate as descends, void, ii. 400 ; iii. 18, 459.
- made valid by statute in England, ii. 400 ; iii. 459.
- rules adopted in construing under the Statute of Wills, iii. 446.
- how far the doctrine of *cy pres* is applied, ii. 619 ; iii. 437, 443.
- how made, and effect given before statute of uses, ii. 633 ; iii. 426.
- governed by the law of the place of the land, iii. 169, 430.
- how far after-acquired property passes by, iii. 432.
- who may be devisees, iii. 435.
- to charitable uses, law as to, iii. 435, 453.
- how far statute of Eliz. adopted in United States, iii. 438 – 442.
- how far *cy pres* adopted as to, in United States, iii. 437 – 443.
- for accumulation, laws as to, iii. 683, 684.
- how far statute of Eliz. confirmatory of common law, iii. 438 – 442.
- how far beneficiary devisee may be ascertained by appointment, iii. 452 – 455.
- what is subject of devise, iii. 443, 444, 446.
- of rents, &c. same as of the estate, iii. 450.
- effect of devisee dying before devisor, iii. 444 – 446.
- effect if devise be void *ab initio*, iii. 445.
- whether such devises go to residuary devisees, iii. 445, 446.
- effect upon devise over, if prior one dies, iii. 446.
- how far disseisee may devise his right, iii. 446.
- interest of devisee vests at testator's death, iii. 450.
- if no devisee ascertained, how far devise void, iii. 450 – 455.
- no one compellable to accept devise, iii. 460.
- how devisee may disclaim a devise, iii. 461.

DIGGING,

- clay, soil, &c. when waste, 130.
- in one's own land, how far lawful in respect to adjacent land, ii. 330 – 333.

DIGNITIES,

- not the subject of property in the United States, ii. 250.

DISABILITY,

- of owner prevents gaining easements by user, ii. 302 ; iii. 147.
- it must not arise after right of possession accrues, iii. 147.

DISAFFIRMANCE, (See DISCLAIMER.)

- right of, as to a lease, a personal one, 402.
- within what time it must be exercised, 403.

DISCHARGE OF MORTGAGE, ii. 125, 177.

(See MORTGAGE, VI.)

- distinguished from assignment, ii. 178.

DISCLAIMER OF TENANCY,

- by tenant for life, effect of, 106.
- executors cannot disclaim testator's leasehold, 404.
- of lessor's title by tenant, effect of, 491 – 495.
- is a waiver of notice to quit, 495.

DISCLAIMER OF TENANCY — Continued.

how far tenant is estopped to make, 482, 483.

it may make him a disseisor, 491, 492.

how far it works a forfeiture, 493, 494.

how far lays foundation for bar by limitations, 495.

DISCONTINUANCE,

by husband's deed of wife's estate, 578.

DISSEISIN,

what it is, and who parties to, 48, 52; iii. 116, 118.

entry does not work one while owner in possession, 48.

estate of disseisor a fee, 66; iii. 116, 122.

his wife may have a dower, 203.

how far two can be joint disseisors and joint tenants, 555; iii. 122.

effect of one of two abandoning possession, 555; iii. 120.

right of disseisee to recover for crops, 122.

when tenant's disclaiming lessor's title is, 491, 492.

effect of, upon wife's right, if made against husband, 166, 312.

effect upon mortgagee, if mortgagor is disseised, ii. 158.

mortgagor cannot disseise mortgagee, ii. 158.

tenant cannot disseise except at election of lessor, 495.

cannot be of a rent, ii. 254.

writ of entry upon a real action, 263.

no force requisite to constitute a disseisin, iii. 129.

of tenant, does not affect reversioner, iii. 132.

nature of the title gained by disseisin, iii. 145, 146.

States not subject to, iii. 172, 173.

when made so by election of owner, iii. 116.

what owner must do to avail of such election, iii. 117.

may be by a grantor against his grantee, iii. 88.

DISSEISEE,

cannot convey lands while disseised, iii. 292 - 295.

how far deed of is effectual, iii. 294.

DISSEISOR,

who is, and how he becomes such, iii. 115, 116.

DISTRESS FOR RENT,

in England, extended to rents charge and seck, ii. 256.

effect of, to affirm a lease, 425.

in what States it exists, ii. 256, 257.

originally an incident of tenure, ii. 250.

(See the STATES severally.)

DIVERTING WATER,

right of, an easement, ii. 319 - 322.

not to the injury of pre-existing mills, ii. 322.

applies only to streams of water, ii. 323.

how far it applies to underground waters, ii. 325.

how far to water, from artificial sources, ii. 328.

right does not exist as a way or aqueduct once defined, ii. 325.

DIVIDING HERITAGES,

effect on creating easements, ii. 288 - 292.

DIVORCE,

a bar to dower, 228.

statutes relating to, as such, 292 - 295.

may bar curtesy, 168.

if granted in one State, how far binding in another, 199.

DOMINANT ESTATE,

in respect to easements, ii. 275.

is bound to repair ways, ii. 311.

DOMO REPARANDA,

writ of, when applied, ii. 336.

DONEE,

of a power, who is, ii. 594.

DONOR AND DONEE,

applied in estates tail, 87.

DOORS,

of a dwelling-house a part of the realty, 10.

DOS DE DOTE,

what it is, and how illustrated, 241.

(See DOWER.)

DOWER,**I. HISTORY AND NATURE OF,**

its history, 170 - 174.

how affected by Magna Charta, 175.

how far adopted in the States, 173.

nature of the estate, 284, 285.

how far affected by law of place, 176.

relates to real estate alone, 174.

seisin of, a continuance of husband's seisin, 288.

tendency of late to abolish it, 172, 250, 251.

of the various kinds formerly in use, 174, 175.

that by *custom* only in use now, 174.

is an incident to fee-simple estates, 75.

of a widow's quarantine, 175, 255.

used synonymous with "thirds," 175.

how far alienable, 286.

widow's estate in, a freehold, 290.

II. OF WHAT PROPERTY AND ESTATE,

(See the STATES severally.)

of what widow is dowable, 179.

requisites of, 179 - 181, 197, 201, 225.

how far husband's estate must be an inheritance, 180, 209.

not in a reversion, 181.

may be had in a rent, 254.

in estate of tenant in common, 185.

DOWER — Continued.

- in exchanged lands, 185.
- in estates in fee and in tail, 75, 95.
- in partnership lands, 186–188.
- in equitable estates, 188–190, 209, 210.
- in equities of redemption, 158, 192, 212.
- in moneys, when, 192, 211.
- in lands purchased and not paid for, 192, 193.
- none in lands held by husband in mortgage, 190 ; ii. 133.
- in lands subject to liens, 193.
- in mines, &c. 193.
- in wild lands, 129, 194, 195.
- in incorporeal hereditaments, 195.
- in a defeasible estate of husband, 207, 240, 244, 248.
- none in estates *per autre vie*, 180.
- must be of what her child could inherit, 181.
- none in joint tenancies except by statute, 184.
- how far the right carries emblements, 196.

III. REQUISITES OF,

- legal marriage, 197–201.
- seisin of husband, 201–204.
- what seisin of husband necessary, 209, 239.
- when union of life estate and reversion gives, 183.
- how affected by a possibility between them, 183, 184.
- effect on, of conveyance before marriage, 203.
- instantaneous seisin not sufficient, 204–208.
- how affected by a satisfaction of a mortgage, 212–218.
- effect on, of foreclosure of mortgage, 212.
- death of husband a requisite, 225.
- in England and many States, must die seised, 250, 251, n.

IV. HOW LOST OR BARRED, 226–239, 245.

- in equitable estates how barred, 211.
- barred by foreclosure of mortgage, 212, 235.
- how forfeited, 228.
- how barred by estoppel, 235.
- how barred by rebutter, 238.
- how far conveying a greater estate forfeits the right of, 228.
- by what form of release she bars her claim, 230, 236.
- requisites of deeds of release to be effectual, 231–234.
- how far she can release by attorney, 233 ; iii. 233.
- husband must join to make a good deed, 230, 231.
- how far barred by husband's deed, 230, 250, 251.
- when barred by levy of husband's creditors, 239.
- how far by elopement and adultery, 227, 228.
- is barred by divorce, if the party in fault, 228, 292–298.
- how far avoiding the husband's deed affects her right to, 234.

DOWER — *Continued.*

- when defeating husband's seisin bars her right, 239.
- of the doctrine "*dos de dote peti non*," &c. 241.
- not defeated by the natural determination of the husband's estate of inheritance, 244.
- effect of defeating husband's estate by executory devise, &c. 244-247.
- how far barred by jointure, 248.
- how barred by statute of limitation, 249, 250, 284.
- how barred by exercise of eminent domain, 252.
- how affected by State mill laws, 253.
- her right not affected by foreclosure of husband's mortgage, 285-287.

V. PROCEEDINGS TO RECOVER AND ASSIGN,

- remedy for in case of existing mortgage, 216, 217.
- in action for, what is *prima facie* evidence of husband's seisin, 219-221.
- in what cases tenant estopped to deny husband's seisin, 221-224.
- judgment in, a double one, 264, 267.
- that for damages follows that for seisin, 267.
- what damages allowed in, 264, 267.
- may have *habere facias* on her judgment, 268.
- she cannot enter till it is set out to her, 255, 268.
- when set out by sheriff, 268.
- how and by whom assigned, 254-283.
- how set out by act of law, 268.
- of assigning it of, and against "common right," 256.
- must be by metes and bounds, 257, 269.
- when it may be otherwise set out, 257, 269.
- parol assignment sufficient, 257.
- must be by tenant of the freehold, 258.
- may be made by infant or guardian, 258.
- must be absolute for life, 258.
- how set out in mines, 270.
- must be of what gives one third of income, 271.
- what reference had to increased value of estate, 271.
- action to recover at law, 259-264.
- what previous demand necessary, 261.
- probate proceedings in, 259.
- equity, proceedings in, 259, 276-278.
 - in case of mortgaged estates, 277-280; ii. 196.
 - in case of money, 282, 283.
- what she contributes to redeem a mortgage, 282, 291; ii. 198.
- when dower may be assigned *de novo*, 270.
- how far affected by change of value of the premises, 271-275.

VI. CHARACTER AND INCIDENTS OF,

- widow takes it subject to all existing equities, 204.
- how far bound to contribute towards charges upon, 110, 291.
- liable for waste upon, 291.

DOWER — Continued.

- no tenure between her and the heir, 288, 289.
- owes fealty to the heir and why, 290.
- how far she may call on mortgagor's personal, to discharge mortgage, ii. 184.
- statutes relating to effect of divorce on dower, 292 — 295.

DOWRESS,

- how to contribute towards incumbrances, 110, 291.
- right of estovers, how to cut wood, 117, 129.
- right of, to emblements, 120, 196.

DRAIN,

- easement of, ii. 323, 330.
- gained by grantor over land of grantee, ii. 288.

DRY TRUSTEE,

- his character and duty, ii. 482.

DURESS,

- effect of, upon a lease, 402.
- what is, and its effect on a deed, iii. 234, 295.

DWELLING-HOUSE,

- who responsible for repairs, ii. 836.

DYING WITHOUT "HEIRS," "ISSUE," &c.

- limitation upon, ii. 647, 648.
- when a remainder and when an executory devise, ii. 648 — 650.
- (See FAILURE OF ISSUE.)

E.**EASEMENTS,**

- in what they consist, 22, 542; ii. 275.
- how distinguished from licenses, 542, 543.
- if withheld in part, effect on rent, 466.
- strictly incorporeal rights, ii. 276.
- distinguished from *profits à prendre*, ii. 276.
- not personal rights, but attached to estates, ii. 275.
- not the subjects of possession, ii. 344.
- use of, equivalent to seisin of things corporeal, ii. 345.

I. HOW CONSTITUTED AND CREATED, ii. 277, 278; iii. 51, 52.

- require two estates, dominant and servient, ii. 277.
- one cannot have in his own land, ii. 277, 280, 288.
- created by deed of grant or prescription, ii. 277; iii. 301.
- cannot be by parol, ii. 279.
- may be by grant or covenant as to servient estate, ii. 279.
- may be reserved by grantor in favor of a stranger, ii. 279.
- may be created, though no privity between the estates, ii. 279.
- when created by implication, ii. 281 — 283.
- instances of easements by implication, ii. 288.
- creating one in one part of premises by granting another part, ii. 283 — 285.

EASEMENTS — Continued.

what is necessary to produce this, ii. 285 – 288.
 how construed, when by express or implied grant, ii. 278.
 how construed, when by prescription, ii. 278.
 how far gained by a severance of a heritage, ii. 288 – 293.
 public can gain by custom, but not by prescription, ii. 305.

(See CUSTOM, PRESCRIPTION.)

II. DIFFERENT KINDS OF EASEMENTS.

affirmative and negative, ii. 277.
 nature and incidents of appurtenant easements, ii. 279, 280.
 how far they pass with the parts of an estate, ii. 280, 283, 284.
 how far there may be of wind for a mill, ii. 319.
 of prospect only by express grant or covenant, ii. 319.
 of ways, ii. 307 – 316.

(See WAYS.)

of water, ii. 319 – 330.

(See WATER-MILLS.)

none of flowing water in one's own soil, ii. 320.
 right not affected by change of mill, ii. 324.
 of discharging water from, and of clearing race-way of a mill, ii. 324.

of discharging water on to another's land, ii. 324.
 of aqueduct, ii. 324.

none in underground waters, ii. 325 – 327.
 how far there may be in an artificial flow of, ii. 328.
 of support of houses and land, ii. 330 – 333.

(See SUPPORT.)

of support of surface, &c. in case of mines, ii. 333.
 of support of one house by another, ii. 333.
 of party walls, ii. 334, 335.
 of support of parts of a house, ii. 335.
 of carrying on offensive trades, ii. 336.
 of fishing in another's water, ii. 337.
 of having fence maintained, ii. 337.
 of maintaining a wharf, ii. 337, 338.
 distinction between, and custom, ii. 338 – 339.
 of *profit à prendre*, how far gained by individuals, ii. 338, 339.

(See PROFIT, &c.,

must be prescribed for, in a *que estate*, ii. 339.
 of light and air, ii. 316, 316 – 319.

(See LIGHT, &c.)

III. HOW LOST OR EXTINGUISHED,

by joint ownership of the two estates, ii. 277, 343.
 by release or abandonment, ii. 340, 342.
 what acts are an abandonment, ii. 340 – 341.
 unity of estates does not affect the right to natural streams, ii. 343.

EASEMENTS — Continued.

- one liable for obstructing, though no actual damage, ii. 339.
- one used by widow with dower, expires with her estate, ii. 304.

EAVES,

- no easement in water falling from the house of another, ii. 339.

EJECTMENT,

- history and nature of, 382, 383.
- trustee may have against *cestui que trust*, 512.
- to an action of, co-tenant cannot set up title in a stranger, 569.
- how far previous entry requisite in, 390.
- when it lies to recover rent, ii. 259.
- cannot be maintained by States, iii. 172.

ELECTION,

- by widow of dower or jointure, 300–302.
- by lessor in treating tenant as disseisor, 495, 509.
- to treat assignee of tenant at will as his own lessee, 508.

ELEGIT,

- writ of, how levied on land, ii. 26.

ELOPEMENT,

- and adultery, how far dower barred by, 227, 228.
- does not bar widow's claim to jointure, 301.

EMINENT DOMAIN,

- how far affects dower, 252.
- effect of eviction by, on recovery of rent, 460.
- damages for, may be claimed by lessor and lessee, 460.
- right of, an incident to State sovereignty, 54; iii. 191.
- may be exercised upon corporate franchise, ii. 271.

EMBLEMENTS,

- what and to whom belong, 118–124, 502.
- what rights are incident to, 119, 123.
- what is essential to a right to, 120.
- when crops do not become such, 121.
- what crops are, depends on usage, 123.
- what the law as to, in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, 123.
- when disseisee cannot recover crops, 122.
- effect on crops of foreclosing mortgage, 124.
- effect on crops of enforcing a judgment lien, 124.
- when they go with dower, 120, 196.
- they go to tenants at will, 506.

(See ESTATES FOR LIFE.)

ENGLISH LAW,

- how far adopted here, 25, 26.

ENJOYMENT, iii. 52.

(See USER.)

ENTAILMENT,

- of estates, a custom rather than a right, 97.
- mode of creating a temporary one by marriage settlements, 97.

ENTIRETY,

- of interest and estate, incidents of, 577.
- in husband and wife, 315, 577.
- distinct from joint tenancies and tenancies in common, 577.
- effect on, of the survivorship of either, 578.
- effect on, of conveyance by husband, 166, 578.
- effect on, of disseisin of husband, 166, 578.
- in what States estate of husband and wife in common or joint tenancies, 580.
- husband and wife may hold in entirety with a third person in common, 579.

ENTRY,

- when necessary by a mortgagee to recover rent, ii. 132.
- when a means of foreclosing mortgages, ii. 223.
- when made may be waived, ii. 225.
- how made to avoid a lease, 421 - 423.
- necessary to determine tenancy at sufferance, 536.
- necessary to complete estate for years, 389.
- how far necessary to maintain ejectment, 390.
- how far necessary to avoid infant's deed, 401.
- effect of, if made for breach of condition in lease, 419.
- when owner may make one on his tenant by force, 530, 537.
- how made in different manors or counties, 45.
- actual, necessary to defeat estate upon condition, ii. 13.
- necessary to lessor's having trespass against tenant for holding over, 522.
- writ of, lies by mortgagee to recover the premises, ii. 120, 122.
- lies by trustee against *cestui que trust*, ii. 483.
- what sufficient to regain seisin, iii. 119.
- as a mode of acquiring title to public lands, iii. 176 - 180.
- right of, not the subject of grant by deed, iii. 303.

EQUITABLE ESTATES,

- what are, and why so called, 23 ; ii. 424, 425, 454.
- (See TRUSTS.)

EQUITABLE MORTGAGES,

- what are, ii. 58, 83 - 94.
- how far deposits of title deeds are, ii. 83.
- how far vendor's lien is, ii. 83.
- how far vendee has, for advances made, ii. 93.

EQUITY PROCEEDINGS,

- to recover dower, 260, 276.
- for partition, 581, 582.
- courts of, control trust estates through the persons of the trustees, 480.

EQUITY,

- may enforce contract to convey, iii. 215.
- of redemption, ii. 41.
- (See MORTGAGE, X.)
- dower in, 192, 212 ; ii. 157.

ERASURES,

&c. in deeds, effect of, and by whom to be explained, iii. 220-224.

ESCHEAT,

an incident to feudal tenure, iii. 46.

in what it consisted, iii. 47.

what it is in modern law, iii. 47.

applies only to one dying intestate without heirs, iii. 47.

fact of, established by "office found," and in what States applied, iii. 47, 48.

State may grant such land before office found, iii. 48.

State may estop itself from claiming an escheat, iii. 48.

did not extend to interests of *cestui que trust*, iii. 49.

vested remainder in fee, subject to, iii. 49.

the State takes the land as the intestate held it, iii. 49.

ESCROW,

what form of delivery makes a deed one, iii. 267-273.

not when delivered to the grantee, to hold himself, iii. 267.

has no effect till condition performed and second delivery, iii. 271, 272.

one holding, bound to deliver, if condition performed, iii. 272.

ESTATE,**I. IN GENERAL,**

indicates the interest in land, 59.

origin of the term, 59.

how far land warrants are real estate, iii. 181, 182.

classes and divisions of, 60.

legal and equitable, why so called, ii. 354.

what freehold and what chattel, 60.

(See FREEHOLD.)

equitable, what is, 23.

in common, 562.

(See COMMON.)

upon condition, 23.

(See CONDITION.)

in joint-tenancy, 553.

(See JOINT TENANTS.)

by entirety, what they are, 577.

(See ENTIRETY.)

in partnership, 573.

(See PARTNERSHIP.)

in rents, ii. 253.

(See RENTS.)

II. NAME AND CHARACTER OF,**1. In fee-simple, natures and qualities of, 65-68.**

when "heirs" necessary to create, 71-74.

what are incidents of, 75.

liable for debts, 75.

ESTATE—*Continued.*

- subject to alienation, curtesy, dower, and descent, 68, 75.
- may exist in incorporeal property, 70.
- can be no remainder after, 76.
- fees determinable by uses and executory devises, 76.
- fees absolute, conditional and base, 77–79.
- 2. *estates tail*, their origin, 81–83.
 - how far exist in United States, 98–100.
 - created by statute *de donis*, 83.
 - are estates of inheritance, 87.
 - what words necessary to create, 87–92.
 - general and special, 90.
 - exist in lands and tenements, not in chattels, 83, 89, 502; ii. 657, 672.
 - heirs of donee take by descent, 89.
 - how affected by rule in Shelley's case, 93.
 - in what manner they descend, 96.
 - why they admit of remainders, ii. 506.
 - estates in chattels absolute, though in terms in tail, 502; ii. 581.
 - practical effect of entailments, 84; ii. 581.
 - cannot be limited to a child of one unborn, 97; ii. 539.
 - cannot be limited beyond period of perpetuity, 97.
 - how barred by fines and recoveries, 84–87; ii. 651.
 - introduced by Taltarum's case, 85.
 - how barred by deed, 87, 96.
 - may be temporary in marriage settlements, 97.
 - may be determinable or on condition, 88.
 - incidents of, 94, 95.
 - liable for tenant's debts, 95.
 - no merger of such estates, 95.
 - how tenant to contribute toward incumbrances, 95.
 - after possibility of issue extinct, 98.
- 3. *for life*, how created, 101–104.
 - are freeholds not of inheritance, 104.
 - may be of uncertain duration, 103.
 - for one's own life better than for that of another, 102.
 - when *per autre vie*, 102, 104, 105.
 - effect, if tenant dies before *cestui que vie*, 180.
 - what are peculiar to these; 107, 180.
 - how the latter are regulated by statute, 108.
 - when estates for life merge in reversion, 104.
 - can only be conveyed by deed, 105.
 - effect on, if tenant conveys a greater estate, 105, 106.
 - effect on, of tenant's disclaimer of tenancy, 107.
 - duties of tenant, 109, 110, 112.
 - must pay taxes assessed, 112.
 - must contribute to pay charges on estate, 110, 282, 291; ii. 197, 198.

ESTATE — *Continued.*

- must keep houses and fences in repair, 135.
- cannot claim for improvements, 110.
- may remove buildings erected by him, 134.
- if tenant dies, its effect on his sub-tenant, 112.
- possession by, not adverse to reversioner, 113.
- tenant of, liable for waste, 125, 135.
- entitled to estovers and emblements, 115, 118.
- remedy against him for waste, 136 – 138.
- may hold without impeachment of waste, 136.
- must defend the title, and may pray aid, 109.
- 4. *at will*, what are, 503.
 - cestui que trust* to trustee, 512.
 - what are such, at this day, 505, 510, 511.
 - rent not always incident to, 512.
 - how they grew into estates from year to year, 504, 520.
 - rights of parties to, at common law, 504.
 - nature of lessor's and tenant's interests, 505.
 - tenant entitled to estovers and emblements, 506.
 - in what cases the law implies such tenancy, 510.
 - tenant may have trespass against a stranger, 505, 509.
 - tenant liable to lessor in trespass, not in waste, 508.
 - how far lessor may have trespass or case against a stranger, 509, 510.
 - how determinable, 505, 506.
 - what acts have the effect to determine, 506 – 510.
 - effect of the death of either party, 507, 530.
 - effect of abandoning the estate, 508.
 - conveyance or lease by lessor determines it, 530.
 - effect of disclaiming lessor's title, 509.
 - is a waiver of notice to quit, 495, 519.
 - how determinable by notice, 506, 510, 516.
 - what notice requisite, and how given, 516, 517, 524 – 528.
 - may be determined by some prescribed time or event, 518, 519.
 - in such case no notice required, 518, 519.
 - after notice, tenant has reasonable time to remove his effects, 509, 516.
 - how far accepting rent after notice revives the tenancy, 529.
 - determined by surrender of estate, 529.
 - if determined by notice, lessor may enter by force, 530.
 - what parol leases good under the statute of frauds, 531, 532.
 - parties bound by the terms of the letting, though by parol, 532.
- 5. *for years*, history of, 381 – 383.
 - (*See LEASES.*)
 - tenant originally bailiff of the freeholder, ii. 499.
 - what are embraced under, 383.
 - must be a *term* of definite duration, 385, 388, 389.
 - possession but not seisin predicated of, 389.

ESTATE— *Continued.*

- until possession taken, tenant has no *estate*, 389.
- tenant cannot have trespass till entry made, 390.
- when tenant liable for rent before entry, 392.
- how they may be created, 389, 393–396.
- may be created *in futuro*, 386.
- cannot be held in tail, 502.
- when created by estoppel, 399.
- when clothed with incidents of freehold, 407.
- what conditions are incident to, 414.
- may be availed of by executors, &c. 390.
- of outstanding terms, satisfied terms, &c. once in use, 408–410.
- tenant is possessed, never seised, 51, 389.
- terms of, may pass by way of executory devise, 502.
- 6. *from year to year*, their origin, 505, 517, 519.
- what constitutes, 520.
- do not prevail in Maine and Massachusetts, 517.
- the same incidents to, as to estates for years, 522, 523.
- entry and paying rent makes one, 531.
- agreement to pay rent essential to, 520.
- paying rent on a parol lease sufficient, 531.
- letting must be for an indefinite time, 520.
- when holding over, after lease expires, creates it, 521.
- how determined, 519, 523, 529, 530.
- may be determined by notice, 520, 524–526.
- in other respects, still estates at will, 525.
- how notice to be given and served, 525–528.
- effect of committing waste on tenant's right to notice, 524.
- how notice may be waived, and effect of, 524.
- how far demand of rent is such waiver, 524.
- determined by surrender, 529.
- death of either party does not determine it, 530.
- how far tenant liable in trespass for holding over, 522.
- how far tenant bound to make repairs, 523.
- after tenancy determined, lessor may expel tenant by force, 530.

ESTOPPEL,

- its nature, and on what it rests, iii. 68.
- 1. *as to suits*, for dower, when tenant may not deny husband's seisin, 221–224.
- one claiming as heir, may not deny ancestor's death, 221.
- when widow barred by, to claim dower, 236.
- when barred by her ancestor's covenant, 238.
- in deed, applies only to actions upon the deed itself, iii. 86.
- 2. *applied to leases*, makes an indenture good as to after-acquired estate, 399, 486; iii. 86, 108.
- continues only during the term, 485, 486; iii. 86, 108.

ESTOPPEL — *Continued.*

- does not extend to infants or *femes covert*, 400; iii. 75, 107.
- does not apply to leases when lessor has any estate, 400; iii. 86, 106, 108.
- of lessee to deny lessor's title, 484; iii. 86, 109.
- how far it reaches lands not embraced in lease, 483.
- applies, though lessee hire his own estate, 485; iii. 86.
- extends to lessor's heir, 487.
- lessee not estopped if lessor is not in possession, 485.
- on what it rests and how far extends, 483; iii. 68, 69.
- applies to parol leases, as well as leases by indenture, 486.
- extends to assignee or vendee of lessee, with notice, 486.
- applies between lessee and assignee of lessor, 486, 487.
- extends to case of use and occupation, 486.
- in setting up adverse title, how far it extends, 486, 487.
- in what cases tenant not bound by it, 487 - 489.
- does not apply, after an eviction, 488, 492.
- till substantial eviction, tenant bound to pay rent, 492.
- tenant bound by it till he yields possession, 490 - 493.
- sub-tenant may show entry and ouster by original lessor, 488.
- tenant of mortgagor may show eviction by mortgagee, 489.
- tenant may show his lessor has assigned his interest, 489.
- cannot attorn to a title hostile to that of his lessor, 488, 495.
- tenant may yield *bona fide* to a better title than lessor's, 490.
- tenant, to avoid his lease, must first surrender possession and give notice, 490 - 493.
- 3. *between co-tenants, to setting up title in a stranger*, 569, 590.
- after partition, one cannot claim adversely to the other, 590.
- in acquiring title by, how applied, iii. 69.
- in pais* and by deed, iii. 69.
- rules as to, in law and in equity, iii. 70.
- 4. *in pais* cannot be pleaded, may be proved, iii. 71.
- instances of, *in pais*, iii. 70 - 74, 78 - 85.
- public dedication established by, iii. 70, 71.
- where one has induced another to settle on his land, iii. 72.
- where one suffers another to purchase what he claims, iii. 73, 75.
- where one suffers another to expend money on land he claims, iii. 73.
- how far fraud or concealment must enter into the act, to estop, iii. 74, 76, 77, 78.
- effect, if the act be done by mistake of fact, iii. 74, 77, 78, 80.
- one bound, though mistaken, who induces another to act, iii. 79, 80.
- mistake of law does not affect an act, iii. 79.
- in pais* just as effectual as by deed, iii. 74.
- no one bound *in pais*, who would not be by deed, iii. 75.
- can only be availed of by one who acts upon faith of the other's act, iii. 76.

ESTOPPEL — *Continued.*

how far parties estopped by fixing fences, lines, and bounds, between lands, iii. 81 – 85.

one entering upon land of another by executory contract, bound by, iii. 85.

5. *by deed*, better defined than *in pais*, iii. 85.

effect is to give validity to a deed otherwise void, iii. 85.

applies only to parties and privies, iii. 86, 99, 109.

difference as to, between indentures and deeds poll, iii. 86, 87.

how far grantee in fee may deny grantor's title, iii. 86, 87, 92.

how far grantor estopped as to estate described, and as to title, iii. 87, 91, 110.

grantee may not set up his own seisin against his grantor, iii. 87, 88.

grantor estopped, to deny he had an interest in the land, iii. 91, 92, 97, 98.

this limited to those who could make a good deed, ii. 91.

effect of recitals in deeds and wills, and in deeds referred to, as estoppels, iii. 87, 93 – 96, 292.

rule does not apply to a void deed, iii. 100.

nor to collector's deed for taxes, iii. 206.

how far grantor estopped, by referring to a street as bound, iii. 93.

distinctions between estoppels in evidence and in point of estate, iii. 93.

grantor may not deny a name used in a deed, iii. 238.

how far a deed estops grantor and heirs from claiming the land, iii. 88 – 111.

feoffor estops himself, but not his heirs, iii. 88, 102.

release passes only what releasor has, iii. 89, 91, 99, 102.

deeds under uses do not work estoppels, iii. 108, 109.

except in California, iii. 99.

how far one without title estopped, to claim land granted, iii. 97 – 100, 110, 111.

title not *in esse*, passes by estoppel by warranty, iii. 89, 90, 101, 102.

effect of grant, with or without warranty, iii. 89, 90, 381.

doctrine of estoppel by grant with warranty, iii. 101 – 103, 110.

such estoppel enures to the first grantee of the estate, iii. 103, 110.

doctrine of estoppel extends to mortgages, iii. 99.

if covenantor sue and recover damages, it bars his claim by estoppel, iii. 104.

a grantor may disseise grantee, iii. 104.

of limiting the covenant by what is granted in the deed, iii. 105, 106.

covenant does not work an estoppel if deed is defective, iii. 105.

nor if the deed conveys any title and estate, iii. 105.

one covenanting for title *in autre droit*, bars his personal claim, iii. 106.

how far *feme covert* is estopped by joining with husband in deed, iii. 106 – 108, 234.

ESTOPPEL — Continued.

- persons claiming under others estopped, are so themselves, iii. 110, 111.
- case of *Douglas v. Scott*, iii. 96, 97.
- how far award as to title estops, iii. 111.
- how far award as to division lines binding, iii. 82.
- how far the doctrine of estoppel by covenant questioned, iii. 111, 112.
- of estate in after-acquired land created by covenant of warranty, 399; ii. 264; iii. 397, 407.

(See DEEDS, COVENANTS.)

ESTOVERS,

- in what they consist, 115 - 118.
- may not be exchanged, 116.
- rule as to, more strict in England than here, 117.
- tenant may take to repair house, though ruinous, 117.
- right to, passes to grantees, 118.

(See ESTATES FOR LIFE.)

- tenants at will entitled to, 506.

EVICITION,

- effect of, on rent, 428.
- necessary, in order to recover upon covenant of warranty, iii. 406.

EXCEPTIONS,

- in deeds, how construed and applied, iii. 369 - 371.
- often used instead of reservation, iii. 369, 375.

EXCHANGE,

- of land, its effect on dower, 185.

EXECUTION,

- estates by, ii. 25.
- sale on, works assignment of lease, 445.
- laws and statutes as to, of several States, ii. 27 - 34.
- proceeding on, in England, by *elegit*, ii. 26.
- how far a lien on debtor's lands, ii. 26 - 29.

EXECUTORY AND EXECUTED,

- interest distinguished, 28.
- trusts defined and explained, ii. 451 - 453.

EXECUTORY INTEREST,

- of springing and shifting uses, ii. 577.

EXECUTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS,

- may enforce mortgages, ii. 134, 135.
- either of two or more may underlet or assign a term, 404.
- how far may apply personal to redeem mortgages, ii. 184, 185.
- cannot do it if estate insolvent, ii. 185.
- cannot disclaim interest of deceased under a lease, 404.
- when trustees, and when clothed with power, ii. 436, 614.

EXECUTORY DEVISES,

- definition and history of, ii. 632 - 635, 650.

EXECUTORY DEVISES—*Continued.*

- rules as to, like springing uses, &c. ii. 633.
- how far transferable or transmissible, ii. 632, 650, 662, 663, 675.
- not an estate, but more than a possibility, ii. 632, 664.
- into what classes divided, ii. 635, 637.
- distinction between, and remainders, ii. 502, 640, 648, 649.
- why limitations construed remainders, if possible, ii. 639.
- something foreign from the common law, ii. 385.
- when a devise over may be a remainder or executory devise, ii. 642.
- where contingent remainders and executory devises may change to each other, ii. 642, 643.
- limitation may take effect though prior contingent one fails, ii. 646, 649.
- successive limitations good, unless a prior one takes effect in fee, ii. 646.
- executory devises indestructible, ii. 649.
- holder of prior estate can do no act to affect, ii. 675.
- how affected by rules against perpetuity, ii. 651–657, 674, 676.
- (See PERPETUITY.)
- limitations after “failure of issue,” &c. ii. 647, 654–661, 667.
- 1st class, a fee to one with a limitation over, ii. 635.
- 2d class, a freehold to come into effect *in futuro*, or on condition, ii. 636.
- must be future in terms, or some one ready to take at devisor's death ii. 637.
- when the estate goes out of devisor, ii. 637.
- 3d class, freehold interests in chattels, 502; ii. 656, 660, 671–675.
- no freehold of these at common law, ii. 671.
- devise of a term at law, an entirety, ii. 672.
- no estate tail in chattels, ii. 656, 657, 672.
- devise of the use of a chattel is of the chattel itself, ii. 673.
- when devise over good where first taker has power of disposal, ii, 669, 673.
- why executory devisee takes no estate, but a right, ii. 664.
- a future vested interest may be divested by contingency, ii. 665, 666.
- distinction between contingency of an estate and its enjoyment, ii. 666.
- when limitations subsequent to an executory devise are executory, ii. 667.
- where limitations construed executory to give them effect, ii. 668.
- executory devisee may stay waste, ii. 669.
- curtesy may be had in an estate defeated by, 153; ii. 670.

EXPULSION,

- of tenant by force, when lawful, 530, 537–541.
- what amounts to, 461, 462.

F.

FAILURE OF ISSUE,

- effect of limiting estates after, ii. 647, 654 - 661, 667.
- when held to create an estate tail, ii. 655.
- when too remote and void, ii. 655, 656.
- tendency to construe it a definite failure, ii. 656, 557.

FALSA DEMONSTRATIO NON NOCET,

- instances of, iii. 344 - 347.

FARM LET,

- used in demising lands, 396.

FATHER,

- has no right to lease child's land, 404.

FEALTY,

- an incident of tenure, 31.
- due from widow to heir, 289.
- not due from tenant at will, 506.
- distinguished from oath of allegiance, 31.
- always due from tenant to reversioner, ii. 251.

FEOFFMENT,

- what is, and how made, 22, 30.
- deeds of, work no forfeiture now, 106; iii. 305.
- to use, operation of, ii. 391.
- deeds of, how made and their effect, iii. 305.
- how far deeds in Massachusetts are such, iii. 311.

FEE, FEUD, FIEF, or FEOD,

- what it is, 30.
- what are proper feuds, and what improper, 31.
- when first alienable, 40, 42, 67, 68.
- distinguished from *hoc lands*, 28.

conditional, 76, 79, 81.

(See CONDITION.)

determinable, 77.

(See DETERMINABLE FEE.)

qualified or base, 77.

(See BASE FEE.)

tail, 80 - 100.

(See ESTATES TAIL.)

FEE FARM RENTS,

- what are, and how created, ii. 251, 252.

FEE-SIMPLE,

- estates in, 57 - 79.

(See ESTATE.)

theoretically entire, and infinite in duration, ii. 498.

susceptible of being subdivided, ii. 498.

at common law, limited to corporeal property, ii. 498.

"absolute," meaning of, 66, 76.

FEOFFEE TO USE,

- his office in uses, ii. 357.
- same as modern trustee, ii. 357.
- relation of, to *cestui que use*, ii. 357.

FEME COVERT,

(See MARRIED WOMAN.)

FENCES,

- tenant to keep in repair, 135.
- how far he may cut timber for, 135.
- duty to maintain, may be fixed by prescription, ii. 327.
- this extinguished by joint ownership of both parcels, ii. 337.
- how far adjacent owners estopped by fixing dividing ones, ii. 81-85, 142.

FERRY,

- franchise of, ii. 68.
- independent of property in the water or banks, ii. 269.
- does not affect the right to navigate the water, ii. 269.
- obligations and rights of owners of, ii. 269.
- generally regulated by statute, 270.
- interference with, a nuisance, ii. 270.
- how far one may be a nuisance to another, ii. 270.
- owner of, liable for injury by want of care, ii. 271.
- grant of, may be revoked, ii. 271.

FEUDUM TALIATUM, 81.

(See ESTATES TAIL.)

FEUDAL LAW,

- its origin and character, 26.
- when introduced into England, 26, 27, 32, 33, n.
- what are its characteristics, 29, 30; ii. 354, 355.
- uncertain how far in use with the Saxons, 26, 27.
- recognized only the right to occupy land, ii. 354.
- services, what are, 30, 31.
- what base, free and military, 37.

FIDEI COMMISSUM OR COMMISSI,

- under the Roman law, ii. 356.
- its resemblance to uses, ii. 356.

FIERI FACIAS,

- writ of, effect of levy on land, ii. 26.

FILUM,

- aqua*, iii. 353-357.

(See THREAD OF STREAM.)

- via*, iii. 360-363.

FINE,

(See HIGHWAY.)

- when paid as a feudal service, 35, 36.
- regarded as a mode of passing a title to lands, 84, 85, 317.
- abolished in England, 85.

FINE— *Continued.*

- rarely used in the United States, 85, 230.
- formerly adopted to convey lands of *femes covert*, 317.
- to lead to uses, how applied, ii. 332.

FIRES,

- tenant not liable for accidental, 136.

FISH,

- right to take, a *profit à prendre* rather than easement, ii. 276.

FISHERY,

- right of, an easement, ii. 237.
- how the same may be gained, ii. 237.
- effect on, of death of servient owner, ii. 237.

FIXTURES,

- what are, and how governed, 14 – 20.
- when and by whom may be removed, 15 – 20.
- attached by mortgagor, pass by the mortgage, 15, 17; ii. 149, 157.
- what are trade fixtures, 16 – 18.
- when removed become chattels, 20.
- when buildings may be removed as such, 133, 134.
- mortgagor cannot remove, ii. 123, 143.
- rolling stock of railroads are, in some cases, ii. 149.

FLATS,

- law of Massachusetts as to, iii. 360.
- may be sold separate, or with upland, iii. 360.
- how measured where shore line is crooked, iii. 367, n.

FLORIDA,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64; iii. 44.
- Advancement*, law as to, iii. 41.
- Boundary*, how far reputation a proof of, iii. 365.
- Bargain and sale*, a form of deeds, ii. 420.
- Children*, illegitimate made heirs, iii. 42.
- Descent*, laws as to, iii. 24.
- Deeds*, good if sealed only, iii. 244.
- Dower*, of all the husband died seized of, 252.
- Entails* of estates prohibited, 99.
- Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 29.
 - levy of, on mortgagor's right, ii. 154.
- Joint tenancies*, how far exist, 556.
- Judgment*, how far a lien on land, ii. 28.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 149.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Married women*, need not join husbands in deeds, iii. 230.
 - rights and powers of, 319.
- Mortgages*, how assigned, ii. 118.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 240.
 - assignee of, sues alone, ii. 228.
- Partition*, how made of estates, 600.

FLORIDA — Continued.*Purchase-money*, vendor's lien for, ii. 93.*Scroll*, a good seal, iii. 247.*Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.*Wills*, how many witnesses required, iii. 430.**FLOWING LANDS,**

by, one joint tenant ousts the other, 558.

of another, right of, gained as an easement, ii. 321.

is a violation of the right of property, ii. 322.

statute rights of, for mill purposes, ii. 322.

FORCE,

when tenant may be expelled by, 530, 537.

FORCED SALE,

what is, 359.

FORECLOSURE, 641.

(See MORTGAGES.)

FORFEITURE,

how far, by tenant granting too large an estate, 106, 107.

how far disclaimer of title works one, 107, 493.

where failing to pay taxes works one, 112.

how far attornment or collusion works one, 493.

how far conveying a fee by a widow works one, 229.

if tenant at will suffer the land to be set off for his debt, it works one, 508.

by reason of committing waste, 137.

for crime done away with, ii. 47.

by breach of condition of lease, 415.

what amounts to waiver of, 424, 425, 529.

when not avoidable, 425.

how saved by tender of amends, 423-425.

of a right to notice by tenant at will if he commit waste, 524.

FRANCHISE,

in what it consists, ii. 267, 268.

what the subject-matter of, ii. 268.

how created, ii. 267, 270.

charter granting one, a contract, ii. 271.

how far legislature restricted by prior grant of one, ii. 272.

legislature may authorize one to destroy another by eminent domain, ii. 271.

subject of levy for debts of corporation, ii. 273.

(See BRIDGE. — FERRY.)

FRANK MARRIAGE,

an estate in, defined, 82.

FRANK TENEMENT,

how defined, 60.

FRAUD,

- leases obtained by, voidable, not void, 402.
- how soon to be avoided, if at all, 402.

FRAUDULENT CONVEYANCES,

- what embraced under, iii. 295-299.
- bona fide* purchaser from, holds, iii. 299.

FRAUDS, STATUTE OF,

- how far affecting parol leases, 531.
- exceptions in, as to leases in the different States, 531.
- how far violated by the effect given to equitable mortgages, ii. 85.
- or by proving an absolute deed a mortgage, ii. 50-58.
- does not apply to executed licenses, 549, 550.
- first to require deeds to convey lands, iii. 214.
- generally adopted in the United States, iii. 214.

FREEHOLDER,

- who is regarded as such, 60-62.
- bound to defend or maintain the estate, 62.
- must answer to "aid prayer" of tenant, 62.
- was tenant to the *præcipe*, 62.
- effect of judgment against, on remainder-man, 68.

FREE BENCH,

- widow's dower in copyhold, 175.
- how it might be lost and regained, 175.

FREEHOLD,

- what estates are, and why, 41; ii. 498.
- used to imply quantity of estate, 42.
- created by livery of seisin, 42, 60.
- tenancy of, must be full by feudal law, 51.
- what are, and what not of inheritance, 60.
- as ordinarily used, implies a life estate, 60.
- identical with *liberum tenementum*, 60.
- is never in abeyance except in case of glebe lands, 61, 62.
- tenant of, one of the *pares curiæ*, 60.
- he might be juror at common law, 60.
- is said to be seised of estate, 61.
- and possession convertible terms at common law, iii. 306.
- cannot be created to commence in *futuro*, 61; ii. 383, 497.
- how far it may be by bargain and sale, ii. 383-388; 323, 325.
- can only be conveyed by deed, 549.
- may be created in *futuro* by covenant to stand seised, iii. 323.
- essential qualities of, 61, 62.
- when it merges a term, 480; ii. 671.
- what are incidents to, ii. 498.
- could not be of a chattel interest, ii. 657, 671, 672.
- created in, by springing uses and executory devices, ii. 671-675.

FREE SERVICES,

- what were, 37.

FUTURE USE, ii. 564.

(See CONTINGENT USE.)

G.

GAVELKIND,

dower by, what it is, 175.

several takes by, as one heir, 561.

GEORGIA,

Aliens, may hold lands, 64.

Advancement, law as to, iii. 41.

Abandonment, by disseisor, effect of, iii. 63.

Bargain and sale, a form of deeds, ii. 420; iii. 313.

Children, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 43.

posthumous rights of, ii. 552.

Confiscation, of lands in, iii. 188.

Covenants, what in use in deeds, iii. 397.

Deeds, time in which to be recorded, iii. 287.

when recorded, used in evidence, iii. 288.

of warranty, not an estoppel, iii. 112.

how many witnesses required, iii. 248.

forms of, in use, iii. 313.

deposit of, creates a lien, ii. 86.

Damages, rule of, in covenants of warranty, iii. 423.

Descent, laws as to, iii. 24.

how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689; iii. 14.

Disseisee, cannot convey lands, iii. 294.

Distress, lies for rent, ii. 256.

Dower, recovery limited to seven years, 249.

Estates tail, changed to fees, 99.

Execution, levy of, on lands, ii. 30.

Foreclosure, of mortgages, how made, ii. 240.

who parties to process for, ii. 233.

who bound by it, ii. 232.

Heirs, not requisite to pass a fee, 41.

Husband, takes whole of wife's estate, 150.

Joint tenancies, how far they exist, 556.

Judgments, from liens on land, ii. 28.

Leases, what not within statute of frauds, 531.

how to be executed by agents, 395.

Lien, created by deposit of deeds, ii. 86.

Limitation, of real actions, iii. 63, 149.

and prescription, seven years, iii. 63.

upon "failure of issue," &c. ii. 683.

Mines, belong to land-owners, iii. 340.

Mortgages, mere liens, — not estates, ii. 102.

may not be proved by parol, ii. 51.

how foreclosed, ii. 240.

GEORGIA — *Continued.*

Partition, of estates, how made, 599.

Prescription, time of, seven years, iii. 63.

Scroll, answers for a seal, iii. 247.

Shelley's case, rule in, prevails, ii. 561.

Uses, applied in conveyances, ii. 411.

charitable, rules as to, in force, iii. 439.

Wills, how many witnesses required, iii. 430.

marriage and birth of a child revoke, iii. 458.

Witnesses, two required for a deed, iii. 248.

how many for a will, iii. 430.

GIFT,

originally a feoffment in tail, iii. 305.

now applies to any transfer without a consideration paid, iii. 305.

GIVE AND GRANT,

how far covenants, iii. 411, 412.

GLEBE LANDS,

exception as to rule against abeyance, 62.

person seized of, as a corporation sole, 73.

GRANT,

what is said to lie in, 22; iii. 306.

distinction now done away in England, iii. 300, 306.

originally applied to incorporeal interests, 22; iii. 163.

the only mode of acquiring easements, ii. 276.

what interests passed by at common law, 22.

express, can only be by deed, ii. 277.

must be to "heirs" to create an inheritance, 71, 72.

after made, grantor in possession a tenant at will, 511.

of an easement, proved by prescription, 542, 549.

presumption of, answers to modern prescription, ii. 293.

no enjoyment short of prescription is any evidence of grant, ii. 304.

implied, carries what is necessary to enjoy the thing granted, ii. 278.

what easements pass by implied grant, ii. 280, 283 - 288.

that of prospect never passes by implication, ii. 287.

easements apparent and continuous, pass with parts of heritage, ii. 288 - 293.

easements reserved by implication in a grant, ii. 288, 289.

when a grant is an implied covenant, 426; iii. 411, 412.

by lessee, operates an assignment, 443.

is now applied to all transfers of real property, ii. 394; iii. 163, 300.

English statute mode now of conveyance, ii. 394.

deeds of, requisite to convey incorporeal hereditaments, iii. 306.

deeds of, only operated upon the right, iii. 306.

extends now to conveyances of every kind of interest in lands, iii. 306, 307.

grant has become a generic term of conveyance, iii. 330.

GRANT — *Continued.*

- what are sufficient words of, in a deed, iii. 329–331.
- grant of use of, or dominion over lands, carries the land, iii. 333.
- grant of rents and profits of land carries the land, iii. 333.

GRANTOR,

- may disseise his grantee, iii. 88.

GUARDIANS,

- leases by, of ward's lands, 404.
- effect of holding lands after office expires, 535.
- parent, as such cannot lease lands, 404.
- demand for dower may be made on, 261.
- may assign dower, 259.

H.**HABERE FACIAS SEISINAM,**

- writ of, in dower, 268.

HABENDUM,

- its use and properties in a deed, iii. 371–375.
- words in, words of limitation, iii. 373.
- required in deeds by statute of Massachusetts, iii. 186.

HAY BOTE,

- or hedge bote, what it is, 115.

(*See ESTOVERS.*)

HEIR,

- defined and distinguished from assigns, iii. 6.
- apparent and presumptive, iii. 6.
- cannot be of one living, iii. 6.
- at law, who is, iii. 6.
- apparent, cannot grant his interest in the estate, iii. 302.

HEIR LOOMS,

- what are, 14.

HEIRS,

- why necessary at common law to a fee, 41, 71.
- "of the body," one person at a time, what included, ii. 559.
- in what States, not required to create a fee, 41, 75.
- (*See the STATES severally.*)
- when not necessary to carry a fee in wills, 74, 75.
- not always requisite in creation of trusts in fee, 72.
- not requisite in legislative grants, 72.
- "right," means same as simply heirs, 72.
- releases by joint tenants pass a fee without, 73.
- release by disseisee to disseisor, carries a fee, 73.
- take ancestor's lands, subject to his debts, 76.
- of lessor, entitled to rents of leased lands, 451.
- how several shall sue for rent, 454.
- of mortgagor, when they can call on personal to redeem estate, ii. 184.
- words of limitation, may be of purchase, ii. 558, 560; iii. 239.

HIGHWAY,

as a boundary of land, rules as to, iii. 360 - 363.

HEREDITAMENTS,

what they are, 21.

what corporeal or incorporeal, 21 ; ii. 249, 250.

one lies in livery, the other in grant, 22.

are not tenements, ii. 250.

HERITAGES,

severance of, when creating easements, ii. 288 - 292.

applies, though the parcels are not locally united, ii. 292.

HOLDING,

of lands by tenant of lord, 29, 30.

how far identical with seisin by the feudal law, 29.

HOLDING OVER,

by tenant, effect of, 533.

HOMAGE,

due from vassal to lord, 31.

how performed, 31.

HOMESTEAD,

law of, 325 - 380.

on what the doctrine of rests, 326, 367, 370, 376.

what is implied in the term, 326, 329.

rules applied in construing the right, 326.

the system of, a recent one, 327.

what kind of estate it resembles, 325, 346, 349, 351.

attaches only to a residence, in favor of an occupant, 329, 332, 333.

may attach to a hotel in some cases, 333.

does not attach to mills, factories, &c. 331.

may attach to offices and shops, 335.

what necessary to constitute a residence, 335.

whether it applies to estates in common, 338.

distinctions as to city and agricultural lots, 380.

can only be one at a time, 372.

gaining a new one, abandons a former one, 372.

setting out premises, how far necessary, 339.

how far alienable, and how it may be lost, 361.

act of wife requisite in conveying the same, 361.

what is meant by forced sale, 359.

generally exempt from debts, &c. of owner, 353.

not exempt as to purchase-money, 353.

generally liable for mechanic's liens, 353.

liable in some States for prior existing debts, 353.

law of, depends on statutes, 326.

modes of procedure to enforce same, 378,

in how many States recognized, 325.

whether applied to estates for years, 327.

HOMESTEAD — Continued.

- whether applied to houses on others' lands, 337.
- whether applied to estates contracted for, 337.
- does not attach to estates of trustees, 337.
- effect on, of changing county to city lots, 380.
- estate goes to wife and children on father's death, 347.
- Alabama*, what is exempt under, 338.
- Arkansas*, what is exempt by law, 338.
- California*, who may claim under, 327.
 - what estate exempt under, 330.
 - how ascertained and declared, 339.
 - right of wife in, 347.
 - to what claims subject, and how levied, 353.
 - wife must join in deed to convey, 362.
 - how it may be abandoned, 362, 372.
 - if divorced, wife may have it set out, 378.
 - husband and wife join to enforce, 378.
 - no decree binds wife unless a party, 378.
- Georgia*, who may claim in, 327.
 - what estate is exempt under, 330.
 - how set out and declared, 340.
 - for what debts liable, and how, 354.
 - wife must consent to sale of, 363.
 - removing from not an abandonment, 373.
- Illinois*, who may claim in, 327.
 - what is exempted as such, 331.
 - how excess of divided and sold, 340.
 - for what debts subject to levy, 354.
 - wife must join to convey, 363.
 - wife must expressly waive the right, 364.
 - the right lost by abandonment, 365.
 - lost by ceasing to occupy or have a family, 373.
 - widow cannot affect children by her acts, 373.
 - wife may bar herself by joining in a deed, 373.
 - right of wife in, 348.
- Indiana*, who may claim in, 327.
 - what is exempt as such, 331.
 - how selected and ascertained, 341.
 - widow claims independent of a devise, 348.
 - for what debts liable to levy, 355.
 - wife must join and acknowledge deed to pass, 365.
 - right may be waived without deed, 374.
- Iowa*, who may claim in, 327.
 - what is exempt as such, 332.
 - how selected and made known, 341.
 - wife takes as survivor, and heirs, 348.

HOMESTEAD — Continued.

- Iowa*, for what debts liable to levy, 355.
 - mortgage of, by husband and wife, good, 365.
 - may be lost by abandonment, 366, 375.
 - lost by changing it for a new one, 374.
 - waived by not insisting on it, when, 378.
- Kansas*, what is exempt as such, 338.
- Maine*, who may claim in, 328.
 - what is exempt under, 332.
 - how set out and made known, 341.
 - widow occupies during widowhood, 348.
 - for what debts and liens liable to levy, 356.
- Massachusetts*, who may claim in, 328.
 - what may be claimed as, 332.
 - how ascertained and declared, 342.
 - widow occupies during widowhood, 348.
 - widow has it in addition to dower, 348.
 - the interest in, a freehold estate, 349.
 - for what debts liable, and how levied, 356.
 - effect of mortgage of estate by husband, 356.
 - husband and wife may jointly convey, 366.
 - widow and guardian of children may convey, 367.
 - may be mortgaged for purchase-money, 367.
 - gaining a new one defeats the former, 375.
 - how lost by abandonment, 375.
 - child waives by ceasing to occupy, 375.
 - how set out by process of law, 378.
- Michigan*, who may claim in, 328.
 - what estate exempt under, 333.
 - how selected and declared, 343.
 - not liable for any debts in, 357.
 - widow has rents of during widowhood, 349.
 - wife must join in deed to defeat, 375.
 - a single man may waive by parol, 375.
 - wife may have process to enforce, 379.
- Minnesota*, who may claim in, 328.
 - what may be claimed under, 333.
 - for what debts liable to levy, 357.
 - no formal setting out necessary, 343.
 - widow's estate during widowhood, 349.
 - may be lost by abandonment, 375.
 - descends to widow on death of owner, 350.
- Missouri*, what is exempt under, 338.
- Mississippi*, who may claim in, 328.
 - what is exempt under, 334.
 - how set out and declared, 343.

HOMESTEAD — Continued.

New Jersey, what is exempt under, 338.

New Hampshire, who may claim in, 328.

what is exempt under, 334.

for what debts liable to levy, 357.

no estate, till set-off, goes to widow and children, 350.

absence from estate no abandonment, 375.

widow does not lose it by marrying, 376.

selection of, to be made by the officer, 343.

New York, who may claim in, 328.

what is exempt under, 334.

for what liable to levy, 358.

how ascertained and declared, 344.

may not be sold, widow takes for life, 350.

may be released as other estates, 369.

ceasing to occupy, no abandonment, 376.

North Carolina, who may claim, 329.

Ohio, who may claim in, 328.

what is exempt under, 334.

subject to what liens, 359.

how levy of execution on, made, 359.

right to, remains to minor children, 350.

wife must join to convey, 369.

temporary absence no abandonment, 376.

sheriff sets out the share, 344.

Pennsylvania, what is exempt by, 335.

what debts subject to, 359.

debtor claims it when levied on, 344.

widow take it for self and children, if any, 351.

neglecting to claim when a waiver, 376.

giving a mortgage of a waiver, 376.

South Carolina, what is exempt by, 335.

may be set off by judge of probate, 345.

how the owner may waive, 359.

sheriff sets off debtor's share, 345.

Tennessee, what is exempt by, 338.

Texas, what is exempt by, 335.

what debts it is liable for, 359.

what is meant by a forced sale, 359.

a wife requisite to the right, 351.

a father may defeat children's rights in, 369.

wife must join to convey, 369.

acquiring a new, relinquishes a former one, 370.

how lost by abandonment, 376.

removing to another State abandons, 376.

wife loses by abandoning husband, 377.

wife may litigate her own claims, 380.

HOMESTEAD — Continued.

Vermont, who may claim in, 328.

what is exempt under it, 336.

for what debts liable, 360.

descends to wife in fee, and children, 351, 371.

widow may not have, and dower, 371.

for what mortgage of, good, 370.

gaining a new, relinquishes a former, 371, 377.

widow may have partition of, 380.

West Virginia, who may claim in, 328.

Wisconsin, what is exempt under, 336.

for what debts liable, 360.

descends to widow during widowhood, 352.

how selected and notified, 345.

wife must sign and acknowledge deed, 371.

voluntary removal from, abandons, 377.

HOUSE BOTE,

In what it consists, 115.

(See **ESTOVERS**.)

HOUSE,

when real and when personal property, 3, 4, 12, 551.

what passes under a grant of, iii. 336.

one may have a fee in part of, 12.

when the builder may remove it, 551.

when materials of, may be conveyed as personal, iii. 301.

in leased, how far warranted fit for use, 472.

one part, how far bound to support or repair another, ii. 335, 336.

has no right of support from adjacent land but by prescription, ii. 330, 334.

what right to support of, in working mines, ii. 333.

what right to support, from adjacent houses, ii. 333.

in taking down, what care to be used, and notice given, ii. 334.

rights of, as to party walls, ii. 334, 335.

HUSBAND AND WIFE,

how they hold joint estates, 314, 315.

when they may be tenants in common, 315, 577, 579.

when tenants in entirety, 314, 577.

their share in lands, if held with another, 579.

separate owners or heirs to same ancestor, 315.

of actions by, for injury to wife's lands, 315.

of leases by, of wife's separate estate, 404.

seisin of, of her lands, a joint one, 166, 312, 313.

wife of disseisor cannot tack her possession to his, iii. 131.

wife not barred by disseisin of husband and herself, iii. 133.

how far wife can act by attorney, iii. 232, 233.

HUSBAND,

- rents due at his death, go to his executors, 312.
- his interest in wife's land a freehold, 312, 318.
- is tenant to the *præcipe* of wife's land, 312.
- is not sole seised of wife's land, 166, 312, 313.
- his right of curtesy inchoate till child born, 313.
- cannot, at common law, convey lands to wife, 315, 316.
- may convey to wife by statute of uses, 316.
- may devise lands to her, 316.
- if wife die without issue, his right ceases, 318.
- when liable for waste on wife's land, 318.
- of leases by him of wife's land, 404.
- how far term of wife merges in his freehold, 482.
- effect of his conveyance, on being disseised of wife's land, 167, n.

I.

ILLINOIS,

- Alien* widows, have dower, 64.
- Age*, wife of eighteen may make a deed, iii. 230.
- all females of eighteen may make wills, iii. 433.
- Advancement*, laws as to, iii. 41.
- Bargain and Sale*, a form of deed, ii. 420.
- Children*, illegitimate, when heirs, iii. 42.
- posthumous law, as to, iii. 44.
- Collector's* deed, need not be recorded, iii. 208.
- Contingent* remainder, without a prior estate, ii. 550.
- Covenants*, implied by what words, iii. 413.
- what words create, in deeds, iii. 417.
- Curtesy*, recognized as a right, 150.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 24.
- Deeds*, require two witnesses, iii. 248.
- executed with a scroll, same as a seal, iii. 248.
- if recorded, are evidence, iii. 288.
- not recorded, valid to all having notice, iii. 290.
- must be acknowledged to be evidence, iii. 248.
- of quitclaim, a mode of conveyance, iii. 312.
- Devise*, what estate is created by, 75.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Dower*, may cover half the estate, 174.
- not subject to mechanic's lien, 193.
- paramount to creditor's claim, 239.
- is of all husband has been seised, 251.
- may be in land contracted for, 252.
- may be set out by judge of probate, 260.
- Divorce*, effect of, on wife's land, 293, 294.
- Estates tail*, to what changed, 99.
- at will, how determined by notice, 527.

ILLINOIS — Continued.

Foreclosure, who parties to suit for, ii. 232, 233.

Females, eighteen years old, may make wills, iii. 433.

Heirs, not requisite to a fee, 41.

Joint estates, held to be in common, 556.

tenancies, how far recognized, 556.

Judgment, form liens on land, ii. 28.

Leases, what not within statute of frauds, 395.

stat. of 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 34, in force, 432.

Limitation, of real actions, iii. 149.

Married women, rights and powers of, 319.

deed of, void, unless acknowledged, iii. 229.

deed of, good if eighteen years old, iii. 230.

may make wills, iii. 434.

Mortgages, when barred by lapse of time, ii. 172.

may be discharged on record, ii. 178.

how foreclosed, ii. 245.

may be proved to be by parol, ii. 51.

Purchase-money, creates a lien, ii. 88.

Prescription, for light and air, in force, ii. 318.

Partition, how made, 596.

Statute 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 34, adopted here, 432.

Waste, action of, lies, 144.

Widow's quarantine, what it is, 255.

Wills, what witnesses requisite, iii. 431.

pass after acquired estate, iii. 432.

may be made by females of eighteen, iii. 433.

may be made by married women, iii. 434.

Witnesses, two required for a deed, iii. 242.

how many for a will, iii. 431.

Will, estates at, how determined by notice, 527.

IMPEACHMENT OF WASTE,

leases exempting tenants from, 136.

IMPLIED,

covenants, in leases, 426, 427.

created by "grant," "demise," "lease," &c. in deeds, iii. 411, 412.

condition, at common law, what is, ii. 3.

in leases, what are, 414.

estates created by will, though not given therein, iii. 449.

trusts, what are such, ii. 437.

(See TRUSTS.)

IMPROPER FEUDS,

what are, 31.

IMPROVEMENTS,

one tenant in common cannot make a charge to the other, 571.

nor can he hold these exclusively, 571.

IMPROVEMENTS — Continued.

- tenant for life cannot claim for, of reversioner, 110.
- if made by mortgagor, they pass to the mortgagee, ii. 148, 157.
- how far widow may have dower in, 271, 275.

INCLOSURE,

- actual, how far necessary to constitute disseisin, iii. 135, 136.

INCORPOREAL HEREDITAMENTS,

- what they are, 21 ; ii. 249, 250, 267, 275.
- how far the subjects of lease, 407.
- of dower in, 195.
- may be held in fee-simple, 70.
- are subjects of entailment, 83.

INCUMBRANCES,

- when tenant bound to pay toward, 110.
- what rule applied in apportioning, 110, 282, 283 ; ii. 196.
- (See APPORTIONMENT.)
- what constitutes, iii. 391 – 396.

INDENTURE,

- of lease works an estoppel, 399.
- distinction between, and deeds poll, iii. 278, 280.

INDIAN TITLE, 548 ; iii. 168, 182.

(See ABORIGINAL.)

INDIANA,

- Advancement*, laws of, iii. 41.
- Bargain and Sale*, a form of deed, ii. 420.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
- marriage of parents renders legitimate, iii. 42.
- posthumous, rights of, ii. 552 ; iii. 44.
- Contingency*, what remoteness of, affects estates, ii. 551.
- Common tenants* in, liable for waste, 591.
- Curtesy* abolished, 150.
- Contribution*, to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Damages*, if warrantee evicted, iii. 423.
- Deed*, quitclaim, a form of conveyance, ii. 420.
- two witnesses to, requisite, iii. 248.
- must be acknowledged to be evidence, iii. 248.
- in what time to be recorded, iii. 288.
- what constitutes recording, iii. 285.
- good, though not recorded, to all knowing it, iii. 290.
- Disseisee*, cannot convey land, iii. 294.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 25.
- Dower*, an estate in fee, 173.
- not subject to mechanic's lien, 193.
- whether devise shall be in lieu of, 308.
- Divorce*, effect on wife's land, 293, 294.
- Devise*, when taken in lieu of dower, 308.

INDIANA — *Continued.*

Distress, lies for rent, ii. 256.

Estates tail, abolished, 99.

may be limited to abridge prior ones, ii. 551.

how affected by remoteness of contingency, ii. 551.

• *Execution*, levy on land, ii. 30.

levy on mortgagor's interest, ii. 154.

Foreclosure of mortgage, how made, ii. 240.

who parties to suit for, ii. 230.

suit for, and for the debt, ii. 228.

Fees tail, changed to fees simple, ii. 551.

Freehold, may be created *in futuro*, ii. 550.

Joint estates, held to be in common, 556.

tenancies, how far exist, 556.

Judgments, form liens on land, ii. 28.

Leases, if by parol, are at will, 395, 531.

Limitations, of real actions, iii. 150.

Limitation, upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.

Married women, rights and powers of, 320.

cannot acknowledge deed by attorney, iii. 233.

may make wills of their lands, iii. 434.

Mortgages, proved to be by parol, ii. 51.

give no right to possession, ii. 103.

how assigned, ii. 114.

how foreclosed, ii. 240.

suit to foreclose and for the debt, ii. 228.

order of contributing to redeem, ii. 191.

Purchase-money, forms a lien on land, ii. 88, 92.

Partition of estate, how made, 596.

Perpetuity, rules of, ii. 680.

Remainder may be after a fee, ii. 551.

not affected by defeating prior estate, ii. 551.

Scroll, answers to a seal, iii. 247.

Uses, applied in conveyances, ii. 411.

Waste, lies by a tenant in common, 599.

what action lies for waste done, 143.

Witnesses, two required to a deed, iii. 248.

how many required for wills, iii. 431.

Warranty of title, when implied, iii. 417.

Wills, how many witnesses required, iii. 431.

married women may make, iii. 434.

INFANT,

not affected by estoppel as to title, 400.

how far bound by deeds, leases, &c. 401; iii. 226.

• deed of, voidable, not void, iii. 225.

cannot be avoided while an infant, iii. 226.

INFANT — Continued.

- deed of, what act will ratify such deed, iii. 226.
- how disaffirm deed or lease, 401.
- within what time he may disaffirm, 403.
- how affirm or give effect to leases, &c. 402, 406.
- when bound by a lease, as a necessary, 406.

INHERITANCE,

- what are words of, at common law, 71.
- when it will pass without "heirs," 72, 558, 561.

INJUNCTION,

- to stay waste when granted, 145, 146, 318.
- in favor of one co-tenant against another, 570.
- by owner of a ferry against a nuisance, ii. 270.
- by mortgagee against mortgagor, to stay waste, ii. 129.
- by lessor, to prevent lessee cutting wood, 487.
- to stop nuisance to an easement before actual damage, ii. 287, 340.

INSANE,

- and persons *non compos*, how far bound as lessors, 400, 401.
- how they may avoid their acts, 401.
- what acts and deeds of void, 400, 401.
- what acts and deeds voidable only, 401 ; iii. 226.
- how they may ratify these, iii. 226, 227.
- may be made lessees, 406.

INSOLVENT,

- assignee of, when bound by covenants in lease made with the debtor, 456, 457.
- may elect, whether to accept the lease and covenants, or not, 457.

INSURANCE,

- condition, not to alien, not broken by mortgaging, ii. 156.
- effect of aliening after assigning the policy, ii. 215, 216.
- both mortgagee and mortgagor may have independent policies, ii. 213 - 215.
- how far insurer may be subrogated to place of mortgagee, ii. 213 - 215, n.
- generally, mortgagee may not charge for, ii. 212.
- when he may insure at mortgagor's charge, ii. 212, 216.
- when either accountable to the other on account of, ii. 212 - 216.
- when mortgagor and mortgagee must join in suit for, ii. 216.
- effect of, if made by lessor or lessee of an estate, 468.
- how far lessor insured is bound to rebuild, 468.

INSTANTANEOUS SEISIN,

- what is such, 204 - 208.
- its effect on dower, 204.

INTENT,

- general, in a will, how far it controls particular, ii. 540.
- not to be defeated by a particular one, ii. 559.

INTERESSE TERMINI,

- defined, 387, 389.
- may be enforced by executors, &c. 390.
- is the subject of grant, &c. 391.
- cannot be surrendered, 391.
- how it may be extinguished, 391.
- holder of, liable for rent, 392.
- rules as to, apply to all leases *in futuro*, 391.

INVESTITURE,

- the act of conferring a feud, 30, 44.
- how it was performed, 44.

IOWA,

- Advancement*, laws as to, iii. 41.
- Alienage*, no disability of, 64.
- Attorney*, wife may make deed by, iii. 233.
- Common*, tenants in may have waste, 591.
- Contributing*, to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
- Covenants*, in deeds, how construed, iii. 413.
- what words create in deeds, iii. 413, 416.
- Charitable*, uses adopted here, iii. 439.
- Conveyance*, of lands, without a deed, ii. 420.
- Deeds*, need not be sealed, ii. 420 ; iii. 244.
- unrecorded good to all with notice, iii. 290.
- Damages*, what recovered of warrantor, iii. 423.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 26.
- Devise*, what estate it creates, 75.
- Dower*, is at common law, 173.
- is of equitable estates, 191.
- is of all husband was seised of, 251.
- Freehold*, how far may be created *in futuro*, ii. 550.
- Foreclosure*, of mortgages, suit for and the debt, ii. 228.
- Heirs*, not requisite to pass a fee, 41.
- Joint*, estates held to be in common, 556.
- tenancies, how far exist, 556.
- Judgments*, form liens on lands, ii. 28.
- Leases*, what are not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 151.
- Married women*, their rights and powers, 320.
- may make deeds by attorney, iii. 233.
- may act as trustees, ii. 481.
- Mortgages*, a conveyance of land, ii. 102.
- how foreclosed, ii. 244.
- suing on to foreclose and for debt, ii. 228.
- order of contributing to redeem, ii. 191.
- may be discharged on record, ii. 178.

IOWA — Continued.

- Mortgages*, power of sale executed by administrator, ii. 74.
may be proved to be by parol, ii. 51.
- Power*, of sale in mortgage executed by administrator, ii. 74.
- Purchase-money*, a lien for on land, ii. 88, 98.
- Partition*, of lands, how made, 601.
- Perpetuity*, rules as to, ii. 681.
- Waste*, form of action for, 138.
lies against tenant in common, 591.
- Will*, what witnesses to required, iii. 431.

IRRIGATION,

- riparian right of water for, ii. 320, 321.
- quantity to be applied depends upon state of the stream, ii. 320, 321.
- gives no right to stop the stream, ii. 321.
- not to be exercised against prescriptive rights of mills, ii. 323.

ISLANDS,

- of property in new ones formed, iii. 55.
- when divided by the *filum aquæ*, iii. 56.

ISSUE,

- means same as descendants, ii. 560, 610.
- when a word of purchase, and when of limitation, ii. 561.
- always of purchase in a deed, ii. 561.

(See FAILURE OF.)

J.**JOINT TENANCY,**

- what are its characteristics, 552, 553.
- trustees usually hold their estates in, 559.
- shares of owners presumed equal, 553.
- the owners have one estate, 553.
- how distinguished from coparcenary, 560, 561.
- what meant by "*per my et per tout*," 553.
- survivorship a distinctive quality, 553, 554.
- may exist in fees or less estates, 554.
- may exist in mortgages, 576; ii. 136.
- can only be acquired by a single act of purchase, 554.
- must have unity of interest, title, time, and possession, 554.
- unity of time dispensed with under uses and wills, 554.
- corporations cannot hold by, 554.
- in England, joint ownership presumed to be, 554.
- in United States, presumed to be in common, 555.
- in what States they prevail, and in what abolished, 555, 556, n.
(See the STATES severally.)
- how far two disseisors are, 555.
- husband and wife do not hold in, 314, 315.
- purchase by one of adverse title enures to all, 557.

JOINT TENANCY — *Continued.*

entry and possession of one, are for all, 556.
 must sue and be sued together, 557.
 survivor acquires no new title, 557.
 he takes the estate free of co-tenants' charges upon it, 557.
 either may sever the estate by conveying his share, 558.
 they may sever by mutual agreement, or exclusive enjoyment of parts, 557.
 the purchaser of a share becomes tenant in common, 558.
 to convey to a stranger, requires a grant with words of inheritance, 558.
 one may release to the other, and it carries a fee, 558.
 one tenant may mortgage his share to a stranger, 559.
 joint mortgages, 576; ii. 136.

(*See* MORTGAGES, I.)

a devise of a tenant's share of no avail, 559.
 grant of an estate to two, and the survivor does not make them joint tenants, 559.
 one may have waste against the other, 557.
 one may oust the other, by flowing the land, 558.
 are subject to neither dower nor curtesy, 560.
 how it may be terminated, 560.
 when and how partition may be made, 560.

JOINTURE,

as a bar of dower, 248, 296, 302, 303.
 rests upon the doctrines of uses, 297.
 now gone into disuse in England, 296.
 what are essential to a good one, 298, 304, 305.
 in law and in equity, and their difference, 297, 301, 305.
 when good, though not a joint estate, 299.
 when wife bound by, though a minor, 299, 301, 305.
 when she must assent to, to be bound by, 300, 302, 305.
 effect, if she is evicted of jointure lands, 300, 304.
 not lost by elopement and adultery, 301.
 how far effectual, if settled after marriage, 300.
 lands held as, estates for life, 301.
 effect of conveyance of jointure lands, 301.
 equitable, equally effectual as legal, 301, 302, 304.
 when not bound by, if an infant, 302.
 not bound by a chattel interest, except by express assent, 302.
 what would be a good jointure, 302.
 when widow may elect it or her dower, 302.
 how equity applies a jointure in bar of dower, 306.
 rights of widow, if evicted of jointure, 303, 304, 310.
 what is a testamentary jointure, 306.
 accepting it, cuts off claim on aliened estates, 307.
 when widow may take it, and dower, 306, 307.

JOINTURE — Continued.

- if obliged to elect, when to be done, 306 – 309.
- when held to take as a substitute for dower, 306.
- if she takes, she has the right of a purchaser, 306.
- in what States presumed to be in lieu of dower, 307, 308.
- by what her election is evidenced, 309.
- State statutes upon the subject, 301, 305, 307 – 309.

JOINT ESTATES,

- what have this quality, 553.
- what makes a tenancy in common, 553, 559.
- (See ENTIRETY, JOINT TENANCY, TENANT IN COMMON.)
- statutes regulating ownership of, 555, 556, 591 – 602.
- (See the STATES severally.)

JUDGMENT LIEN,

- when prior to that of mortgage, ii. 141.
- upon the equity, may become one on the land, ii. 154.
- in what States it takes effect, ii. 27 – 29.

JUDICIAL SALE,

- when it operates as an assignment of lessee's interest, 445.

JUS ACCRESCENDI, 554, 573.

(See SURVIVORSHIP.)

K.**KANSAS,**

- Advancement*, laws of, iii. 41.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 43.
- Deed*, good, without a seal, iii. 244.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 26.
- Dower*, of all husband was seised, 251.
- when widow may elect as to, 308.
- when a devise is in lieu of, 308.
- Divorce*, effect of, on a wife's rights to land, 293.
- Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 31.
- Freehold*, how created in *futuro*, ii. 550.
- Husband*, takes half of wife's estate, 150.
- Judgment*, a lien on land, ii. 22.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 158.
- Mortgages*, how foreclosed, ii. 244.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 320.
- may make wills, iii. 434.
- Partition*, of lands, how made, 601.
- Purchase-money* does not form a lien, ii. 93.

KENT,

- allowed to retain Saxon laws, 28, 38.
- military tenures never prevailed in, 29.
- socage, the kind of tenure there, 29, 38.
- lands in, might be devised, 29.

KENTUCKY,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64; iii. 44.
- Advancement*, laws of, iii. 41.
- Bargain and sale*, form of deed, ii. 420.
- Boundary*, evidence of, reputation as to, iii. 365.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
 - posthumous rights of, iii. 44.
- Charitable Uses*, in force, iii. 438.
- Curtesy*, recognized and allowed, 150, 152.
 - how forfeited, 168.
- Common tenants* in, liable for waste, 591.
- Contribution* to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Conveyance*, of land, does not require a deed, ii. 420.
- Deed*, not necessary to pass title to land, ii. 420.
 - need not be sealed, iii. 244.
 - must be recorded, to take precedence of creditors, iii. 289.
 - good as to all with notice, though not recorded, iii. 290.
 - forms of that may be used, iii. 312.
 - in what time to be recorded, iii. 229, 287.
 - what constitutes recording of, iii. 285.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 27.
- Disseisee*, cannot convey land, iii. 294.
- Damages*, recovered of warrantor, iii. 423.
- Devise*, what estate it carries, 75.
 - whether in lieu of dower, 308.
- Distress* for rent, in force, ii. 256.
- Dower*, of all husband was seised, 251.
 - may be of an equitable estate, 191.
 - subject to mechanic's lien, 193.
 - may be had in railroad shares, 194.
 - not lost by granting a larger estate, 229.
 - forfeited by elopement, 294.
 - action for, limited to twenty years, 249.
 - may be assigned in a gross sum, 283.
- Exchanges*, of lands recognized, 185.
- Estates* at will, determined by notice, 527.
 - tail, changed into fees simple, 99.
- Execution*, levy of, on land, ii. 30.
- Freeholds*, may be created in futuro, ii. 550.
- Heirs*, not requisite to carry a fee, 41.
- Husband* and wife are tenants in common, 580.
- Joint tenancies*, how far in use, 556.
- Judgments*, are liens on land, ii. 28.
- Livery* of seisin, never in use here, 46.
- Leases*, what must be by deed, 394.
 - what must be recorded, 410.
 - what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.

KENTUCKY — Continued.

- Lien*, not created by deposit of deeds, ii. 85.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 151.
 - upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 320.
 - must be examined in acknowledging deeds, iii. 229.
 - must acknowledge deeds to be valid, iii. 229, 232.
 - deed of, must be recorded to be valid, iii. 229.
 - may make wills, iii. 433.
- Mortgages*, proved to be by parol, ii. 51.
 - how assigned, ii. 115.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.
 - payment of debts divests the title, ii. 123.
 - order of contribution to redeem, ii. 191.
- Mortgagees*, may charge for services, ii. 217.
- Partition of estates*, how made, 599.
- Purchase-money*, a lien for on land, ii. 88, 93.
- Perpetuity*, rule as to, ii. 681.
- Remainder*, not affected by defeating prior estate, ii. 551.
- Shelley's case*, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.
- Statute 32 Hen. VIII*, ch. 28, in force here, 579.
- Will*, estates at, determined by what notice, 527.
- Wills*, what witnesses requisite for, iii. 430.
- Widow's quarantine*, what it is, 255.
- Waste*, form of action for, 138, 144.

KEYS,

- of locks, part of the realty, and pass with the house, 10.

L.**LANDLORD AND TENANT,**

- what constitutes, 413.
- when it exists as to lands let on shares, 498, 500.
- how bound to each other by covenants in law, 413.
- bound to each other by privity of contract, 413.
- the relation of, extends to assignees, 434.
- no relation of, between mortgagee and mortgagor, ii. 160.
- nor between tenant of mortgagor and assignee of mortgagee, 435.

LAND WARRANTS,

- how far held real estate, iii. 181, 182.

LAND,

- what is embraced in the term, 3, 21 ; iii. 338.
- is never appurtenant to land, iii. 340.
- boca*, what and when used, 28 ; iii. 213, 214.
- destroyed by William I., 32 ; iii. 214.

LEASE,

- I NATURE, MEANING, AND EFFECT OF,** 384.
 - and release as a conveyance of land, ii. 394 ; iii. 330.

LEASE — *Continued.*

how made and executed to be valid, 393 - 396, 410, 411.
 when required to be recorded, 394, 410, 411.
 distinction between, and a contract for one, 397 - 399.
 effect of this distinction on the covenants, 398, 399.
 by estoppel, if made by indenture, 399.
 does not extend to infants and *femes covert*, 400.
 parties to, and who bound by, 400 - 402.
 effect, if by insane persons, infants, *femes covert*, &c. 400 - 402.
 effect, if obtained by duress or fraud, 402.
 when and how ratified, 402, 403, 404.
 effect, when made by husband, father, or guardian, 403, 404.
 may be made by executors, trustees, &c. 404.
 when made by exercise of a power, 405.
 when made by tenants in common, 405.
 when made of partnership property by one partner, 573.
 when made to infants, *femes covert*, &c. 406.
 how ratified by lessees, and when binding, 406.
 what may be leased, 406, 407.
 how affected by statute of uses, 411.
 effect of leases of mines, 411, 412.
 effect of, from mortgagor to mortgagee, ii. 132.
 entry made divests lessor's possession, 411.
 when in the alternative, what is an election, 412.
 conditions in, 414 - 425.

(See CONDITION.)

how affected by unlawful purposes, 412.
 when and how assignable, 442 - 449.
 covenant in, 426 - 441.

(See COVENANT.)

what words in, imply covenants, 426 - 430.
 how far letting on shares is, 496 - 501.

(See LETTING ON SHARES.)

how far parol good, 531.

(See ESTATES AT WILL.)

how far mortgage of, by lessor, is an assignment of, i. 443.

(See RENTS.)

if of a room in a building, effect on, of its destruction, 473.
 may be devised, if not devised, go to executors, 502.
 under a power, ii. 595.

II. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF LESSOR.

who is such, 384.
 cannot have trespass while lessee in possession, 411.
 may not enter, though premises vacant, 411.
 when he may have trover for timber cut, 411.
 when he may oust the tenant, 413.

LEASE — Continued.

how far bound to protect leased premises, 428.
 by what implied covenants bound, 426–429.
 not liable upon implied covenants after assignment, 439.
 may assign his reversion, 450.
 not liable to repair or remove nuisances, 469.
 of estate at will, when he may enter by force, 530.
 does not engage, that the premises are fit for use, 472.
 may not do any thing to prevent the use of the premises, 472.

III. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF LESSEE.

who is, and who may be such, 384, 406.
 is the owner of the estate during the term, 467.
 how far he may work mines, 411.
 may use premises as he will, if no covenants against it, 473.
 may be controlled as to use, by covenant or condition in lease, 474.
 how far, and by what, implied covenants bound, 429, 430.
 not liable on, after assignment made, 439.
 bound by express covenants after assignments, 412, 439.
 may underlet, if not restrained by his lease, 450.
 if premises destroyed, liable for rent, not to rebuild, 440.
 may pay rent to lessor till notified of assignment, 455.
 no release to, by lessor, after assignment good, 455.
 becomes purchaser of them by paying rent in advance, 455.
 how far mortgage by, is an assignment, 455, 456.
 when responsible for repairs and for nuisance, 469.
 cannot object to lessor's title, till disturbed in possession, 483, 492.
 cannot set up a tax title against lessor, 483.
 whether liable to mortgagor or mortgagee, 129, 130.
 holding of mortgagor, no privity with mortgagee, 131.
 how far entry by, upon adjacent lands enures to the lessor, 483, 484.

IV. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF TENANT,

cannot deny landlords title, 484, 486, 487.
 in what cases there are exceptions to this, 487, 488.
 may avoid his tenancy by yielding to a better title, 488, 489.
 to avoid tenancy must surrender possession, 490–493.
 cannot avoid tenancy without notice, 490.
 when he may deny lessor's title and defend against it, 488, 489.
 may be treated as disseisor if he denies lessor's title, 491.
 liable for rent, after denial of title, 491.
 may buy up adverse title after lease expires, 492, 493.
 cannot show that lessor holds by fraud, 492.
 cannot attorn to a better title, hostile to his lessor, 489.
 by attornment, may be liable to two for rent, 489.
 disclaimer of lessor's title, when ground of forfeiture, 493.
 may lay foundation to work a disseisin, 495.
 to work a disseisin must give express notice, 495.

LEASE — *Continued.*

V. ASSIGNMENT AND SUBLETTING, 442 - 457.

- lease assignable unless expressly restrained, 442.
- by what form of writing to be done, 442.
- how far mortgaging is assigning, 443.
- liability of mortgagees in such cases, 455, 456.
- what amount to an assignment, 443.
- what is an assignment, and what an underletting, 444 - 449.
- no privity between lessor and sub-lessee, 449.
- tenant may underlet, unless restrained by the lease, 450.
- but is still liable for the rent, 430.
- lessor in such case may sue lessee or assignee, 430.
- lessee still liable as surety for assignee, 430.
- his liability on implied covenants ceases, 430.
- lessor may assign the reversion, 450.
- no attornment required in case of assignment, 451.
- assignment of reversion carries rent, 451, 452, 454.
- effect of assignment of, in bankruptcy, 456.
- assignee liable for rent of balance of term, 457.
- assignee's liability ceases when privity of estate ceases, 430.

VI. LOSS OF POSSESSION BY EVICTION, &c.

- effect of eviction to defeat claim for rent, 459, 460.
- effect of eviction from part, by lessor or stranger, 459, 461, 464, 465, 466.
- effect of, if done by the government or an enemy, 460.
- how far it affects other covenants than for rent, 459.
- eviction requires possession to be disturbed, 461, 462.
- what acts of lessor amount to, 461 - 464.
- what would be a moral eviction, 462.
- what acts of a stranger do not amount to, 463.
- effect, if lessor withholds part of the premises, 465.
- if evicted by a better title, tenant may resist lessor's claim, 488.
- what may be treated as such eviction, 488.
- rent revives, if tenant enters after eviction, 465.
- when tenant not liable for intermediate rent, 465, 466.
- partial eviction affects no covenant except for rent, 459.

VII. SURRENDER AND MERGER,

- what amounts to a surrender, 105, 474 - 480.
- its effect on an existing lease, 443, 444, 474.
- does not apply to an *interesse termini*, 391.
- discharges covenants in a lease, 466, 474.
- does not affect third parties, 475.
- when a sealed lease is surrendered by a parol one, 476.
- when accepting a new tenant is, 476.
- when lessor must accept possession to be one, 478.
- when lessor's taking possession amounts to, 478.

LEASE — Continued.

how far the act of, depends on intention, 480.
 after surrender of possession, tenant may dispute lessor's title, 489.
 merger of term for years in the inheritance, 409.
 when particular estate merges in reversion, 182.
 what amounts to a merger, 474, 480.
 must be a union of reversion and term, 480.
 effect of union of a less term in reversion with a longer term, 481.
 distinction between union of terms in remainder and reversion, 481,
 482.
 no merger, if estates are held by different rights, 481.

VIII. RENT, WHEN AND TO WHOM PAYABLE, &c.

is something in return for use of premises, 385.
 due the last moment of the day fixed, 113.
 when due, if no time is fixed, 429, 458.
 liability for, not dependent on entry by lessee, 392.
 goes with reversion in entirety, 113, 451.
 how apportioned by statute, 114.
 of action for, in case of assignment, 434.
 how far liability to pay, affected by destruction of premises, 440, 441, 466.
 does not pass with reversion, if due, 461.
 to whom payable if payee is not named, 452.
 may be separated from reversion, 453.
 how to be sued for, and in whose name, 453, 454.
 effect of paying in advance, 455.
 goes to heir instead of administrator, 451.
 goes to heir though estate insolvent, 451.
 none collectable, if tenant evicted before due, 459.
 when apportionable, and how, 458, 464, 465, 466.
 when suspended by acts of lessor, 461, 465.
 when it revives, after being suspended, 461, 465.
 right to recover not affected by acts of strangers, 463.
 eviction by government, does not affect it, 460.
 not affected by any acts not affecting possession, 463, 464.
 defeated wholly by eviction, if tenant refuses to resume possession, 465.
 covenant for rent, independent of other covenants, 468.
 how affected by mortgages of the lessor's estate, ii. 129–133.
 none due from mortgagor to mortgagee, ii. 130, 131.

LEASE AND RELEASE,

as a mode of conveyance, ii. 394, 415, 416; iii. 308.
 what was requisite to give it effect, iii. 308, 309.
 when it operates at common law, and when by way of uses, iii. 308,
 309.

LEGISLATURE,

may grant franchises, ii. 268.
 may grant a second, if not restricted in the first, ii. 272.

LEGISLATURE — *Continued.*

- bound by a charter, as a contract, ii. 273.
- how far constructively bound not to interfere with a prior grant, ii. 272, 273.
- case of Charles River and Warren Bridges, ii. 273.
- of sales made by special act of, iii. 193-199.
- right of exercising eminent domain by, ii. 271; iii. 194.
- cannot take property of one and give to another, iii. 194, 195.

LEGAL ESTATES,

- distinguished from equitable, 23; ii. 424, 425, 454.

LETTING ON SHARES,

- what is, 496.
- how far it creates a contract of lease, 496-501.
- when parties to the letting are tenants in common of the crop, 496-499.
- when the land-owner sues alone for injury to crop, 496.
- when the one raising the crop is the sole owner of it, 496-500.
- when the property in the crop vests in owner of the land, 498.
- difficulty of determining the relation of the parties, 500, 501.

LICENSE,

- what is, and how created, 542.
- distinction between, and easement, 542.
- distinction between an executory and executed one, 543, 544.
- is not assignable, 545.
- what, and how revocable, 544, 546-448.
- what irrevocable, 548-551.
- justifies and excuses acts done under it, 544.
- how far liable, if licensor revokes it, 545-548, 551.
- if executed on licensee's own land, is irrevocable, 550; ii. 341.
- to flow land, how far waiver of damages, 550, n.
- when licensee may remove structures erected by him, 551.
- how far bound to restore premises affected by him, 551.
- executed, may bar or suspend an easement, ii. 341.

LIBERUM TENEMENTUM,

- a freehold, 60.
- such as a freeman might hold, 60.
- (*See* FREEHOLD.)

LIEN,

- in what it consists, ii. 86.
- by mortgage, how created, ii. 36, 43.
- of vendor, for purchase-money, ii. 86.
- of vendee, for advances made, ii. 93.
- who affected by vendor's lien, ii. 87-90.
- vendor's remedy under, ii. 86.
- vendor may assign his lien, ii. 92.
- how vendor may waive this lien, ii. 90, 91.

LIEN — Continued.

- in what States this lien allowed, ii. 87, 88, 92, n.
- mode of enforcing these liens, ii. 93.
- on title deeds deposited as security, ii. 83 – 86.
- of vendor, prevails against dower of vendee's widow, ii. 89.
- what creditors and purchasers affected by, ii. 89.
- the right and remedy purely equitable, ii. 90.
- by builders, how far it affects right of dower, 193.
(See MECHANICS' LIEN.)
- by judgment, widow's dower, how far subject to, 193.
(See EQUITABLE MORTGAGES.)
- judgment creates one on debtor's land, ii. 26, 27 – 29.

LIFE ESTATE, 101 – 104.

(See ESTATES FOR LIFE.)

- measured by the duration of the natural life, 104.

LIFE TABLES,

- of chances for life, what and when used, 281; ii. 198.

LIGHT AND AIR,

- easements of, ii. 277.
- rules as to acquiring, ii. 316.
- upon what ground it may be claimed, ii. 316, 317.
- how far there may be an easement in, ii. 317, 318.
- right by prescription generally denied in the United States, ii. 318.
- may be gained by express or implied grant, ii. 319.
- how far existing lights pass with premises, ii. 281.
- over land of a stranger, does not pass, unless ancient, ii. 281.
- how far vendor may stop windows in the premises sold, ii. 318.
- by what acts owner of, may lose his right, ii. 317.
- effect on the right, of enlarging a window, ii. 317.
- how owner of land may prevent owner of house from gaining easement of, ii. 317.

LIMITATION,

- of an estate, what are words of, ii. 21, 560, 564, 565.
- conditional, what is, 245; ii. 578 – 580.
- collateral, what is, 247.
- of chattel in tail, an absolute grant, 89.
- to the child of one unborn, void, as too remote, ii. 619, 624.

LIMITATIONS, STATUTE OF,

- applies to dower now, but not formerly, 249, 285.
- when it begins to run against lessor by lessee, 491, 495.
- will not run in favor of tenant by sufferance, 536.
- may run in favor of his assignee, 537.
- how it runs as to wife, after husband's conveyance, 578.
- mortgagor's right, how barred by, ii. 169, 170.
- mortgagee's right, how barred by, 171, 172.
- from what time it begins to run as to mortgagee, 173.

LIMITATIONS, STATUTE OF — *Continued.*

what acts by mortgagee do away a statute bar, 169, 170.
(*See* POSSESSION AND LIMITATION.)

LINEAL WARRANTY,

what it is, iii. 408–411.

LINE,

between points, held in deeds to be straight, iii. 352.

LIS PENDENS,

how far notice to all persons, ii. 140.

(*See* PENDENTE LITE.)

LIVERY,

what is said to lie in, 22; iii. 306.

distinction now done away with, iii. 300, 306.

implies corporeal hereditaments, 22.

of seisin, when applied, 22.

how it was made, 44, 45.

rarely in use in United States, and abolished in England, 46.

how applied in case of remainders, 49.

public grant equivalent to, iii. 173.

delivery and record of deed equivalent to, ii. 411; iii. 276.

LORD,

its meaning in a feudal sense, 30.

distinction between mesne and paramount, 30.

every freeholder a feudatory of a superior one, 33.

LOOM,

heir, what it is, and its properties, 14.

LOSS,

of deed, when presumed to give title, iii. 54.

effect of on title if it occur, iii. 223.

LOUISIANA,

charitable uses in force, iii. 439.

curtesy, not recognized, 159.

dower, not recognized, 176.

execution, levy of on land, ii. 31.

deeds, need not be sealed, iii. 244.

descent, laws of, iii. 27.

limitation, of real actions, iii. 151.

realty, what property held to be, 11.

LUNATICS,

may be lessees, 406.

effect given to their deeds, iii. 224–227.

M.**MACHINERY,**

may pass as realty, 10, 16; ii. 148.

when personalty, 16, 17.

MAGNA CHARTA,

its effect on dower, 172, 174.

(See APPENDIX.)

first authorized alienation of land, 43.

MAINE,

Aliens, may hold lands, 64.

Advancement, laws as to, iii. 40.

Children, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 43.

Charitable uses, in force here, iii. 438.

Co-tenants, liable in damages to each other, 558.

Common, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.

Conveyances, work no forfeitures of lands, 107.

Contribution, to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.

Curtesy, allowed here, 150.

Deeds, form of, in use, ii. 410.

quitclaim, a mode of conveyance, ii. 420; iii. 312.

what consideration in, sufficient, iii. 323.

not recorded, valid to all with notice, iii. 290.

equivalent to livery of seisin, iii. 329.

Descent, laws of, iii. 27.

Disseisor, effect of abandoning the estate by, iii. 63, 65.

Disseisin, of husband, how it affects wife and heir, 167.

Divorce, effect of, on wife's right to land, 294.

Dower, in all of which husband was seised, 251.

not in estates held in trust, 191.

not in wild lands, 195.

not in lands bargained for, 220.

action for, limited to twenty years, 249.

when widow may elect or devise, 308.

what damage recovered in action for, 266.

may be assigned in a gross sum when, 283.

Disseisee, may convey his interest, iii. 295.

Defeasance, of mortgage, must be part of the transaction, ii. 60.

Estates, in expectancy, alienable, ii. 552, 664.

Execution, levy of, on lands, ii. 30.

Ejectment, lies by mortgagee, ii. 101, 120.

Jointures, who must be parties to, 300.

by what a widow is barred of dower, 304.

Joint estates, held to be in common, 555.

tenancies, how far exist, 556.

Leases, parol, create estates at will, 395, 517.

what must be recorded, 410.

Legislature, may dispose of land by vote, iii. 186.

Limitation, of real actions, iii. 153.

Lien, created by attachment on writ, ii. 29.

how far deposit of deeds is, ii. 85.

how far one for purchase-money, ii. 87.

MAINE — *Continued.*

Livery, of seisin, deeds equivalent to, iii. 329.

Married woman, may be trustee, ii. 441, 481.

need not be examined to acknowledge deeds, 234; iii. 229.

may make wills, iii. 434.

rights and powers of, 320; iii. 228.

deed of, needs not to be acknowledged, 234.

Mortgages, not proved to be by parol, ii. 52.

pass a freehold, ii. 100.

ejectment will lie upon, ii. 101, 120.

how to be assigned, ii. 113.

may be discharged on record, ii. 178.

how foreclosed, ii. 245.

defeasance of, must be a part of the transaction, ii. 60.

equitable, not cognisable by the courts, ii. 59.

Mortgagee's seisin, only divested by deed, ii. 123.

when trover lies by, against mortgagors, ii. 129.

Partnership, rights do not survive, 575.

Partition, of estates, how made, 594.

Prescription, not gained in light and air, ii. 318.

Shelley's case, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.

Tenants, in tail, can convey a fee, 99.

Wills, what witnesses required for, iii. 430.

pass after acquired estate, iii. 432.

married women may make, iii. 434.

Waste, form of action for, 138, 139, 142, 144.

when lies against a dowress, 129.

Witnesses, how many requisite to wills, iii. 430.

MANORS,

ancient, how created and divided, 34.

their number in England, 34.

courts of, how constituted, 35.

none created since statute *quia emptores*, 42.

grant of, in New York, valid, and why, iii. 171.

MANURE,

when part of the realty, 13, 14.

when it belongs to a landlord, 500.

when to the tenant of a stable, 501.

when a way-going tenant may claim pay for, 14.

MAP,

of land, with streets, &c., effect if referred to in deed, iii. 412.

MARRIAGE,

legal, a requisite of dower and curtesy, 151, 197–200.

conditions in restraint of, effect of, ii. 7, 8.

feudal right of selling or controlling, 36.

legality of, governed by *lex loci*, 198, 199.

MARRIAGE — Continued.

- what form exceptions to this rule, 199, 200.
- case of *Brook v. Brook*, 200.
- if between tenants in common, they still remain so, 315.
- settlement*, object and nature of, 314.
- form of, iii. 465. (See APPENDIX.)
- effect of restraint of anticipation in, 314.

MARRIED WOMEN,

(See HUSBAND AND WIFE.)

- may take deeds of land, 314, 315.
- effect of husband's dissent to such deed, 316.
- how far wife may disaffirm such deed, 317.
- may join husbands in conveying their estates, 317.
- deed of, good though under age of twenty-one, in what States, 231, 317; iii. 230, 433.
- deeds by, forms required, and effect of, iii. 224 - 234.
- how far can make attorneys, iii. 233.
- may bind their estates for another's debt, by mortgage, ii. 48.
- rights of, as sureties, in mortgages for husbands, ii. 201.
- (See the STATES severally.)
- remedy for waste on their land, 318.
- cannot be lessees of an estate by estoppel, 400.
- effect of husband's lease of wife's land, 403, 404.
- may be lessees of land, 406.
- how far wife's term merges in husband's freehold, 481.
- effect on wife's right, of husband's conveyance or disseisin, 166, 578; iii. 133.
- wife's right to recover her lands after husband's death, 578; iii. 147.
- effect of her divorce on her right to recover joint estate, 579.
- not bound by covenants in deeds, iii. 107.
- how far estopped by deed with covenant of warranty, iii. 108.
- mortgage by, void, though for part of purchase-money, iii. 91, 92.

MARSHALLING ASSETS,

- when and how made, iii. 19.
- securities where several are interested, ii. 202, 203.

MARYLAND,

- Allodial*, lands held to be, 54.
- Alienage*, no disability, 64.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Bargain and Sale*, a form of deed, ii. 420.
- what consideration in, required, iii. 322.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
- posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
- Charitable uses*, not in force, iii. 438.
- Confiscation*, of lands, iii. 188.
- Curtesy*, recognized, 150, 152.

MARYLAND — Continued.

- Covenants*, mortgagee, how far liable on, 456.
- Coparcenary*, in force, 562.
- Common*, tenants in, may convey by metes, &c. 565.
- Descent*, laws as to, iii. 15, 28.
 - of estates *per autre vie*, 109.
 - half blood take by, iii. 15.
- Divorce*, effect of, on wife's estate, 294, 295.
- Devise*, when in lieu of dower, 308.
- Dower*, may be had in equitable estates, 191.
 - of all the husband was seised of, 251.
 - damages recovered in action of, 266.
 - action of, survives, 264.
 - no statute bar to the action, 250.
 - may be set out by judge of probate, 260.
 - when it may be set out in gross, 283.
 - distress for rent in force, ii. 256.
- Deeds*, forms of, in use, ii. 313; iii. 316.
 - in what time to be recorded, iii. 288.
 - one witness to, sufficient, iii. 248.
 - are evidence when recorded, iii. 288.
- Estates tail*, changed to fees, 99.
- Ejectment*, lies by mortgagees, ii. 101.
- Execution*, levy of, on land, ii. 32.
- Equity* of redemption, not subject to levy, ii. 155.
- Escheat* of the feudal law, once in force, iii. 47, 48.
- Enrolment* of deeds, makes them evidence, iii. 288.
- Females*, eighteen years of age, may devise lands, iii. 433.
- Foreclosure*, who parties to suit for, ii. 232.
 - how effected, ii. 242.
- Fines* and recoveries, once in use, 230.
- Infant*, may bar herself of dower, 305.
- Joint estates*, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenures, how far recognized, 556.
- Jointure*, when it bars dower, 305.
- Leases*, how signed by agents, 395.
 - what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Life*, what table of chances of, used, 281.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 152.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 320.
 - may make wills, iii. 433.
- Mortgage*, how far proved by parol, ii. 52.
 - effect of payment of, ii. 123.
 - for future advances, ii. 146.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.
- Mortgagee*, how far liable on covenants, 456.

MARYLAND—Continued.

- Purchase-money*, lien exists for, ii. 88, 93.
- Partition* of estates, how made, 602.
- Prescription*, not allowed for light and air, ii. 318.
- Recoveries*, once in use, 230.
- Shelley's case*, rule in prevails, ii. 561.
- Scroll*, equivalent to a seal, iii. 247.
- Uses*, applied in deeds, ii. 412.
- Wills*, what witnesses required for, iii. 430.
 - married women may make, iii. 433.
- Witnesses*, what required for deeds, iii. 248.
 - what required for wills, ii. 430.

MASSACHUSETTS,

- Alienage*, no disability, 64; iii. 45.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 40.
- Acknowledgment* of deed, by wives, 234, iii. 229, 232.
 - husbands only need make, iii. 232.
- Attorney*, wife may make deed by, iii. 233.
- Agent*, public, how to execute deeds, iii. 251.
- Attornment*, statute of Anne in force, ii. 686.
- Bargain and Sale*, in futuro, not valid, iii. 324.
- Boundary* lines, not proved by reputation, iii. 366.
- Collateral Warranty*, once attempted to be used, iii. 408.
- Child*, posthumous, rights of, ii. 552; iii. 44.
 - born after will made takes as heir, iii. 19.
 - illegitimate, how far inherits, iii. 42.
- Confession*, may avoid effect of possession, iii. 63.
- Confiscation* of lands, how effected, iii. 188.
- Collector's* deed, must be recorded, iii. 208.
- Common* tenant in, liable for waste, 591.
- Connecticut River*, not navigable, iii. 356.
- Contribution* to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Co-tenants*, liable to each other in damages, 558.
- Conveyance*, works no forfeiture of land, 107.
- Curtesy*, allowed here, 150.
 - how it may be forfeited, 168.
- Creditor's* claims, subordinate to dower, 239.
- Covenant* to stand seised, good as a conveyance, iii. 324.
- Coves*, flats, &c., rules as to lines of, iii. 367.
- Charitable uses*, in force here, iii. 438.
- Condition*, benefit of, may be devised, ii. 13.
- Damages*, claim of, by mortgagor for land taken, ii. 155.
 - recoverable in action of dower, 266.
 - measure of, if warrantee is evicted, iii. 423.
 - counsel fees not allowed in, iii. 423.
- Deeds*, form of, in use here, ii. 408, 420; iii. 311.

MASSACHUSETTS — *Continued.*

- Deeds*, what consideration in, sufficient, iii. 323.
 - what equivalent to livery of seisin, 46; ii. 411; iii. 329.
 - no time given for recording, iii. 288.
 - not recorded, valid to all with notice, iii. 290.
 - of quitclaim, a good conveyance, ii. 420; iii. 311.
 - what will work estoppels, iii. 100, 102.
 - collector's, must be recorded, iii. 208.
 - by husbands and wives of estates of wives, iii. 228.
 - how executed by public agents, iii. 251.
 - what constitutes recording of, iii. 285.
 - of a disseisee conveys no estate, iii. 294.
- Descent*, of estate *per autre vie*, 108, 109.
 - laws regulating, iii. 29.
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 688.
 - half blood take by, iii. 16.
- Devise*, grantor may make of, the benefit of a condition, 11, 12.
 - what estate passes by, 75.
 - when widow may elect as dower, 307.
- Disseisin* of husband, how it affects wife, 167.
- Dower*, early statute as to, 173.
 - how far may be had in equitable estates, 191.
 - not subject to mechanic's liens, 193.
 - not to be set out in wild lands, 195.
 - not barred by elopement of wife, 228.
 - law as to, if wife is divorced, 228.
 - right to, takes precedence of creditors, 239.
 - not affected by conveying a greater estate, 229.
 - extends to all husband was seised of, 251.
 - in estates for years, if fifty unexpired, 253.
 - action for, limited to twenty years, 249.
 - may be set out by judge of probate, 259.
 - action at law for, sustained, 263.
 - of demand before commencing action, 261.
 - of damages recoverable in, 266.
 - when assigned in a gross sum, 283.
 - law as to, in cases of divorce, 292, 294.
 - when widow may elect as a share, 174.
 - how assigned when the estate is under mortgage, ii. 196.
- Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 30.
 - on estate of mortgagor, ii. 153.
- Escheat*, an incident of sovereignty, iii. 49.
- Expectant* estates, how far alienable, ii. 552, 664.
- Estoppel*, what deeds work as such, iii. 100, 102.
- Flats*, belong to adjoining upland, iii. 360.
- Half blood*, take as heirs, iii. 16.

MASSACHUSETTS — Continued.

Insurance of mortgaged property, rules as to, ii. 214.

Jointures, who are parties to, 300.

what will bar wife's dower, 304.

Joint estates, held to be in common, 555.

tenancies, how far they exist, 556.

Life, chances of, how estimated, 111, 281; ii. 198.

Livery of seisin dispensed with, 46.

delivery of deed equivalent to, 46; ii. 411; iii. 329.

Lien, attachment of, on mesne process, ii. 29.

mechanic's, laws as to, iii. 201.

Limitation of real actions, iii. 152.

Lands, public ownership of, iii. 171.

rights to, under the charter, iii. 171, 183.

granted by votes of legislature, iii. 186.

what is included under the name of, 21.

Land Patents, law as to, iii. 183.

Leases, parol, create estates at will, 395, 517, 531.

what must be by deed, 394.

statute 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 34, in force here, 432.

what must be recorded, 410.

how executed by attorney, 395.

Mill-owners, may flow lands of others, 550.

Married women, rights and powers of, 321.

may make wills, iii. 433.

may release dower by separate deed, 231.

origin of joining in deed with husband, 231; iii. 228.

need not be examined to acknowledge her deed, 234; iii. 229, 232.

Mortgage, not to be proved by parol, ii. 52.

passes a freehold in the land, ii. 100.

seisin created by, only divested by deed, ii. 123.

how to be assigned, ii. 112.

action at law to enforce, ii. 120.

demandant in, cannot recover damages, ii. 131.

may be discharged on record, ii. 178.

order of contributing to redeem, ii. 191.

how foreclosed, ii. 223, 245, 246.

foreclosure applies only to legal mortgages, ii. 246.

statute regulates sale under powers in, ii. 78.

form of judgment in suit on, ii. 122.

rule as to insuring property under, ii. 214.

Mortgagor, claims damages for land taken, ii. 155.

may bring bill without a tender, ii. 169.

interest of, may be levied on, ii. 153.

Merrimac River, not navigable, iii. 356.

MASSACHUSETTS — Continued.

- Mortgagee*, executor of, may sell the estate, ii. 135.
 - when he may charge for services, ii. 217.
 - has the seisin of the lands, ii. 100.
- Mines*, charter of Mass., provisions for, iii. 340.
- Notice*, what to determine estates at will, 528.
- Partition*, how made of Mills, 585.
 - of common lands, how made, 585, 586, 591.
- Proprietors of common lands*, powers of, 587.
- "*Praying in aid*," no longer used, 110.
- Prescription*, limited to twenty years, ii. 293; iii. 53.
 - none for light and air, ii. 318.
- Possession*, effect of, defeated by parol admission, iii. 63.
- Quitclaim*, deeds convey lands, ii. 420; iii. 311.
- Recoveries*, common, abolished, 98, 230.
 - once in use here, 98, 230.
- Rent*, estates in, exist here, ii. 255.
- Recording deeds*, no time fixed for, iii. 288.
- Rivers*, what are not navigable, iii. 356.
- Remainders*, not affected by defeating prior estate, ii. 551.
- Shelley's case*, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.
- Statute* 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 34, in force, 432.
 - 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 28, in force, 578.
 - of Anne, as to attornment, in force, ii. 686.
- Sufferance*, tenant at, to pay rent, 530.
- Soil*, fee of, in the commonwealth, at the Revolution, iii. 171.
- Tenancy*, from year to year, not in use, 530.
- Tenant in tail*, may convey a fee, 99.
- Wills*, what witnesses required, iii. 430.
 - pass after acquired estates, 432.
- Waste*, actions for, form of, 138, 141, 142, 144.
- Willows*, quarantine, what is, 256.
- Will*, estates at, how determined, 528.

MEANING,

- of terms in deeds, parties to may fix, iii. 334, 349.

MECHANIC'S LIEN,

- sales to satisfy, iii. 201.

MERGER,

- when it operates and applies, 95, 105.
- does not apply in case of estates tail, 95.
- when interest of mortgagor and mortgagee merges, 215; 180-183.
- when wife's term merges in husband's freehold, 481, 482.
- not prevented by an intervening contingent remainder, 182.
- of legal and equitable estates, destroy the trust, ii. 470.
- of remainder and particular estate when it does not destroy the remainder, ii. 542.

MESNE LORD, 33.

- profits, what, and how recovered, 568.*
- mortgagee cannot recover for of mortgagor, ii. 131.*

MESSAGE,

- of what it consists and what it embraces, iii. 342.*

MICHIGAN,

- Accumulation, laws as to, ii. 683.*
- Alienage, no disability, 64.*
- Advancement, law of, iii. 40.*
- Bargain and sale, a form of deed, ii. 420.*
- Contingent, future estates, how created, ii. 550.*
- Contingency, how far estates affected by remoteness of, ii. 551.*
- Conveyance, works no forfeiture, 107.*
- Co-tenants, liable in damages to each other, 558.*
- Common, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.*
- Curtesy, abolished, 150.*
- Descent, of estates per autre vie, 109.*
 - laws of, iii. 30.*
- Deed, quitclaim, a form of conveyance, ii. 420.*
 - two witnesses requisite for, iii. 248.*
- Dower, of all husband was seised, 251.*
 - not affected by secret conveyance before coverture, 203.*
- Divorce, effect of on wife's land, 292, 293.*
- Disseisee, cannot convey land, iii. 294.*
- Estates, abridging prior ones good, ii. 551.*
 - expectant, may descend and be aliened, ii. 552.*
 - tail, how changed to fees, 99.*
- Executions, how levied, ii. 29.*
- Foreclosure, suit for and for debt, ii. 227, 228.*
- Freehold, may be created in futuro, ii. 550.*
- Joint, estates, held to be in common, 555.*
 - tenancies, how far they exist, 556.*
- Limitation, of real actions, iii. 154.*
 - upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.*
- Leases, how signed by agents, 395.*
 - what require to be recorded, 410.*
 - what not within statute of frauds, 531.*
- Married women, rights and powers of, 321.*
 - may make a will, iii. 433.*
- Mortgages, may be proved by parol, ii. 52.*
 - only form liens, ii. 102.*
 - for future advances good, ii. 144.*
 - how foreclosed, ii. 240.*
 - suing for and for the debt, ii. 227, 228.*
 - in sales under, mortgagees may bid, ii. 77.*
 - interest of mortgagor levied on, ii. 154.*

MICHIGAN — *Continued.*

- Partition*, of estates, how made, 595.
- Perpetuity*, rule as to, ii. 682.
- Remainders*, not affected by defeating prior estate, ii. 552.
- Shelley's case*, rule in, abolished, ii. 563.
- Scroll*, equivalent to a seal, iii. 247.
- Witnesses*, two required for a deed, iii. 248.
 - what required for a will, iii. 430.
- Waste*, action for, in what form, 138, 143.
- Widow's*, quarantine, what is, 256.
- Wills*, married women may make, iii. 433.

MILITARY,

- tenures and services, what were, 31, 34.
- the most honorable of feudal services, 37.
- abolished by statute of Charles II., 44.

MILLS,

- how dower in, is assigned, 270.
- effect of prior application of water for, ii. 322.
- one may erect one, on a stream above an existing one, 323.
- how partition of, may be made, 585, 586.
- one may not obstruct an existing one, ii. 323.
- owner of, may discharge water from, and clear race-way of, ii. 324.
- on artificial streams, not the same rights of, as on natural, ii. 323.
- statute right of flowing lands for, ii. 322.
- easement of, not lost by change of use, ii. 324.
- what passes under a grant of, or land for mill-dam, iii. 336.
- what a grant of a saw-mill will carry, iii. 336.

(See WATER.)

MILL-STONES,

- when part of the realty, 10.

MINES,

- of property in, 12; iii. 170.
- when corporeal and when incorporeal, 12, 13; ii. 345-347; iii. 339.
- ore "in place," corporeal hereditaments, ii. 347.
- a right to dig ore, incorporeal, ii. 346.
- the corporeal divisible, the other not, ii. 347; iii. 339.
- what passes under grant of, iii. 337, 338.
- may be a freehold in, separate from surface, 12, 13; ii. 346; iii. 337, 338.
- minerals in, may belong to different owners, ii. 345.
- how partition of, made, 585.
- of dower in, 270.
- must be wrought, not to disturb surface, ii. 333.
- how far this extends to houses, &c. ii. 333.
- how far tenant of, may work, 411.
- when working of, is waste, 130.
- when mortgagee allowed for working, ii. 211.

MINES—Continued.

- of gold and silver, by common law, belong to the crown, ii. 351; iii. 339, 340.
- in California, New York, and Georgia, belong to the land-owner, ii. 351; iii. 339, 340.
- laws as to, in California, ii. 348–352; iii. 340.

MINNESOTA,

- Accumulation*, restriction as to, ii. 683.
- Advancement*, laws as to, iii. 40.
- Bargain and sale*, a mode of conveyance, ii. 420.
- Children*, posthumous, rights of, ii. 683; iii. 44.
- Contingency*, remoteness of, affecting estates, ii. 551.
- Contingent*, future estates, how created, ii. 550.
- Covenants*, none implied in deeds, iii. 416.
- Curtesy*, allowed by statute, 150.
- Contributing*, to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Common*, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.
- Conveyance*, does not work a forfeiture, 107.
- Deeds*, of quitclaim, convey land, ii. 420; iii. 312.
 - forms of, and rules as to making, ii. 420; iii. 313.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 30.
 - of estates, *per autre vie*, 109.
- Divorce*, effects of on wife's lands, 293.
- Dower*, is of all husband was seised, 251.
- Estates*, abridging a prior one valid, ii. 551.
 - expectant, descend and are alienable, ii. 552.
 - per autre vie*, descent of, 109.
- Freehold*, may commence in futuro, ii. 550.
- Foreclosure*, of mortgages, how made, ii. 240, 241.
 - suing for, and for the debt, ii. 227, 228.
- Joint*, estates held in common, 555.
 - tenancies, exist how far, 556.
- Judgments*, form liens, ii. 28.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 154.
 - upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 321; iii. 228.
- Mortgages*, how foreclosed, ii. 240, 241.
 - on sale under, mortgagee may bid, ii. 77.
 - proved by parol, ii. 56.
- Partition*, how made, 596.
- Perpetuity*, rules as to, ii. 682.
- Remainders*, effect on, of defeating prior estate, ii. 551.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Scroll*, equivalent to a seal, iii. 247.
- Waste*, action for, form of, 143.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 256.
- Will*, what witnesses to required, iii. 431.

MISSISSIPPI,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64.
- Advancement*, laws of, iii. 41.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
 - posthumous, rights of, ii. 551, 683.
- Charitable uses*, how far adopted, iii. 438.
- Contingent remainder*, may be without a prior estate, ii. 550.
- Covenants*, what words in a deed make, iii. 413, 416, 417.
- Curtesy*, adopted, 150, 152.
- Deeds*, what forms of sufficient, iii. 314.
 - may be good if sealed only, iii. 244.
 - one witness sufficient, iii. 248.
 - equivalent to livery of seisin, iii. 329.
 - in what time to be recorded, iii. 285.
 - when recorded, used in evidence, iii. 288.
 - if not recorded, valid to such as have notice, iii. 290.
 - of quitclaim, a form of conveyance, iii. 312.
 - deposit of, creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Devise*, what estate it carries, 75.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 29.
- Disseisee*, cannot convey lands, iii. 294.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Dower*, in all husband died seised of, 252.
- Estates tail*, how far allowed, 99.
- Ejectment*, lies upon a mortgage, ii. 101.
- Females*, 18 years old, may devise lands, iii. 433.
- Freehold*, estates created in futuro, ii. 550.
- Heirs*, not required to pass a fee, 41.
- Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far prevail, 556.
- Judgments*, form liens on land, ii. 28.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Livery of seisin*, deeds equivalent to, iii. 329.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 155.
 - upon "failure of issue," ii. 647, 682.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 321.
- Mortgages*, how assigned, ii. 115.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.
 - may be discharged on record, ii. 178.
 - when bound by limitation, ii. 170.
 - ejectment lies upon, ii. 101.
 - may be proved by parol, ii. 52.
- Mortgagor*, to redeem, must first tender the debt, ii. 169.
- Mortgagee's claim*, barred by lapse of time, ii. 172.
- Purchase-money*, a lien on land, ii. 92.
- Partition*, how made, 598.

MISSISSIPPI — Continued.

- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Recording deeds*, time given for, iii. 285.
- Remainders*, not affected by change in prior estate, ii. 551.
- Waste*, what actions lie for, 144.
- Widow*, may elect dower or devise, 308.
 - quarantine, what is, 255.
- Witnesses*, what required for a will, iii. 430.
 - one sufficient for a deed, iii. 248.

MISSOURI,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64 ; ii. 45.
- Advancement*, laws as to, iii. 41.
- Bargain and sale*, form of conveyance, ii. 420.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
 - posthumous, their rights, iii. 44.
 - of marriage annulled, legitimate, iii. 44.
- *Curtesy*, allowed, 150.
 - entry on land by wife not necessary to it, 159.
- Common*, tenants in, liable for waste to each other, 591.
 - liable for waste done, 591.
- Contingent remainder*, without prior estate, ii. 550.
- Covenants*, of warranty, when attach to land, iii. 397.
 - what words in deeds create, iii. 413, 417.
 - how they are construed, iii. 417.
 - damages for breach of, iii. 423.
- Devise*, what estate it carries, 75.
- Divorce*, effect of on wife's estate, 293.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 30.
- Deeds*, recorded, used in evidence, iii. 288.
 - what constitutes recording, iii. 285.
- Dower*, exists by law, 173.
 - barred by elopement of wife, 228.
 - of all husband was seised, 251.
 - damages recovered in action for, 265.
 - or devise, how widow may elect, 308.
- Estates tail*, how changed, 100.
- Execution*, levy of, on land, ii. 30.
- Foreclosure*, suing for, and for debt, ii. 228.
 - who parties to process for, ii. 232, 234.
 - how effected, ii. 243.
- Freeholds*, in futuro, how created, ii. 550.
- Heirs*, not requisite to a fee, 41.
- Jointure*, what bars dower, 305.
- *Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 556.
 - tenancies, how far exist, 556.
- Judgments*, liens on land, ii. 28, 29.

MISSOURI — Continued.

- Leases*, how executed by agents, 395.
- parol, create estates at will, 395, 531.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 155.
- upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 321.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 52.
- discharged upon record, ii. 178.
- how foreclosed, ii. 243.
- who parties to the process, ii. 232, 234.
- Purchase-money*, lien exists for, ii. 93.
- Partition*, how made, 600.
- Remainder*, not affected by defeating prior estate, ii. 551.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Scroll*, equivalent to a seal, iii. 247.
- Waste*, form of action for, 138, 143, 144.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.
- Wills*, married women may make, iii. 433.
- what witnesses necessary for, iii. 431.

MISTAKE OF FACT,

- and law, difference in effect of, iii. 79.

MONEY,

- when treated as realty, 20.
- dower may be had in, 192, 193, 211.
- curtesy may be had in, 152.

MONUMENTS,

- always govern in fixing boundaries, iii. 350, 351.

MORTMAIN,

- laws of, restrain holding lands, 65.
- how far prevail in United States, 65.
- origin and cause of, ii. 355.
- how evaded by the clergy, ii. 356, 357.
- statute of Richard II. against, ii. 357.

MORTGAGES,**I. THEIR NATURE, HISTORY, AND FORM.**

1. nature and definition of, ii. 36 - 38.
- how regarded at common law, ii. 36 - 38.
- distinction between *vivum* and *mortuum vadium*, ii. 39.
- Welsh, once, but not now in use, ii. 39.
- how distinguished from rent, ii. 254.
- how distinguished from condition at law, ii. 37, 38.
- how they differ from contract to reconvey, ii. 37.
- effect at common law, of condition broken, ii. 38.
- effect now, of performing condition, ii. 38.
- if once a mortgage, always such, ii. 67.

MORTGAGES—Continued.

- who has possession of the estate, ii. 38.
- when they go as realty, to heirs, ii. 117, 134.
- when they go as personalty, to executors, &c. ii. 42, 134.
- how far it is a conveyance in fee, ii. 113, 127.
- how far subjects of devise, as land, ii. 133.
- in what States they are an *estate*, and in what not, ii. 97, 98.
- this difference caused by *dictum* of Lord Mansfield, ii. 98.
- Martin v. Mowlin*, comments of judges on, ii. 98, 99.
- rules resulting from double nature of mortgages, ii. 97.
- how far an alienation to affect insurance, ii. 156, 215, 216.
- made after, does not affect a mortgagor's will, ii. 152.
- are such, if intended for security, ii. 44, 62.
- history of, ii. 39–41.
- origin of equity of redemption, ii. 40, 41.
- classification of, in United States, ii. 97–110.
- 2. what sufficient in form, ii. 59–62, 65.
 - to create a lien, must be by deed, ii. 111.
 - what conveyance constitutes one, ii. 43, 47, 60.
 - if intended for security, it is one, ii. 44, 62.
 - how proved to be by parol, ii. 50–58.
 - how far inadequate consideration a proof, ii. 65.
 - if in form one, cannot be negatived, ii. 66, 67.
 - what form of defeasance sufficient, ii. 45, 46.
 - how distinguished from agreement to mortgage, ii. 59.
 - how distinguished from a right to repurchase, ii. 62–64.
 - if first discharged, a second takes its place, ii. 110.
 - how far an existing debt essential to, ii. 47–50.
 - what a sufficient description of the debt, ii. 48, 49.
 - of the condition if part is unpaid, all shall be due, ii. 69.
 - of conditions for support, what rules apply, ii. 70.
 - lien of, not affected by changing form of debt, ii. 173–177.
 - form of defeasance at law, ii. 45, 46.
 - form of defeasance in equity, ii. 46, 58–62.
 - deed invalid, if defective in statute form, ii. 59.
 - what a breach of condition of, ii. 237.
 - if simultaneous, what rule applies to, ii. 70.
 - how far affected by the debt secured being negotiable, ii. 225, 226.
- 3. what may be the subject of, ii. 42, 43.
 - of another mortgage, and effect of, ii. 42.
 - cannot be of a mere possibility, ii. 43.
 - of a lessee's interest, how far an assignment, ii. 443, 455.
 - what interests and property pass under, ii. 149, 156.
- 4. with power of sale, law as to, ii. 68, 77, 78.
 - the power survives to mortgagee, ii. 73.
 - how the power to be exercised, ii. 68, 76, 77.

MORTGAGES — Continued.

- effect upon the power, of payment, ii. 79, 123.
- are subject to redemption and foreclosure, ii. 78.
- power of sale passes to assignee, ii. 79.
- 5. made to secure future advances, ii. 143 – 148.
- how far preferred over junior mortgages, ii. 145 – 148.
- failure to pay instalment, may make a breach as to the whole debt, i. 69, 166.
- joint mortgages, with right of survivor, 576; ii. 135, 136.
- to be such, the debt must be joint, 576; ii. 135, 136.
- when foreclosed, owners are tenants in common, ii. 135, 136.

II. RECORDING,

- effect of priority of, ii. 136, 143.
- effect of recording, as notice, ii. 136 – 140.
- who bound by, without record, ii. 139.
- within what time required, ii. 137, 138.
- when one first recorded, is postponed to other, ii. 139.
- supersedes the doctrine of tacking, ii. 142.
- of no effect, if not properly executed, ii. 139.
- effect of mistake in, ii. 137.
- how far record of assignment, notice, ii. 140, 147, 148.
- noting for registry equivalent to recording, ii. 140.

III. ASSIGNMENT OF, HOW MADE, ii. 112 – 115.

- when deed of premises construed to be, ii. 112, 113.
- when debt must pass, to effect one, ii. 114.
- in what States a deed necessary, ii. 113.
- when assignee of legal estate, trustee for the debt, ii. 115, 116.
- rights of assignees affected by *lex loci*, ii. 120.
- in what States assignment of the debt passes the estate, ii. 118, 119, 120.
- when payment construed an assignment, 213; ii. 125, 166, 167, 178, 179.
- what is a discharge, and what an assignment, ii. 178, 179.
- assignment of, when a payment, 213.
- however made, rights under, the same, ii. 119.
- assignment of, carries power of sale, ii. 79.
- assignees have rights and liabilities of assignors, ii. 110.
- second mortgage, an assignment of mortgagor's rights, ii. 110.
- effect of record of, between two assignees, ii. 113, 147, 148.
- how far record of assignment is notice, ii. 140, 147, 148.
- assignee of mortgage should notify mortgagor, ii. 140.
- tender or payment to mortgagee good, till notice given, ii. 113.
- tacking mortgages not adopted in United States, ii. 142, 143.
- when a new debt may be tacked upon an existing mortgage, ii. 143.

IV. TRUST MORTGAGES, NATURE OF, ii. 80 – 83.

- how created, and rights under, ii. 80, 81.

MORTGAGES — Continued.

- how differ from mortgages, ii. 80, 82.
- may be for future advances, ii. 82.
- rights and duties of trustees under, ii. 81, 83.
- how enforced, ii. 81.
- have no equity of redemption, ii. 82.

V. HOW ENFORCED, APPLIED, OR DISCHARGED.

1. writ of entry, when applicable, ii. 120.
 - when proceedings in equity requisite, ii. 121.
 - how widow may enforce, as to dower, 279, 280 ; ii. 196.
2. how applied to different debts held by several, ii. 119, 120.
 - how far security for other debts, ii. 143, 176, 177.
 - when they might be tacked, ii. 142, 143.
 - to be borne *pro rata*, by several estates, ii. 186 — 188.
3. discharged by entry of satisfaction, ii. 178.
 - effect of discharging one of two estates ii. 124, 187, 188.
 - how payment to be proved, ii. 177.
 - effect of payment, or tender on right of possession, ii. 122, 123, 161.
 - given by a surety, discharged by time given to the principal, ii. 201.
 - order of liability for, of several owners of the mortgaged estate, ii. 189 — 192, 193.
 - how far assignee of a second mortgage personally liable for debt to first mortgagee, ii. 111.
 - effect of payment as an assignment, 213 ; ii. 167, 178, 179.
 - when discharge of, gives mortgagor's wife dower, 212 — 216.

VI. LEGAL AND EQUITABLE,

- distinction between, and rights under, ii. 58, 59.
- equity can reform, not make an instrument, ii. 59.
- what agreement makes an equitable one, ii. 59 — 62.
- what are classed as equitable mortgages, ii. 83 — 94.
- 1. deposit of title deeds, when, ii. 83.
 - what necessary to give it effect as such, ii. 84, 85.
 - how far this prevails in United States, ii. 85, 86.
 - how depositor's title foreclosed, ii. 86.
- 2. vendor's lien, how far a mortgage, ii. 86, 90.
 - in what States it prevails, ii. 87, 88.
 - how far it creates an *estate*, ii. 88.
 - against, and in favor of whom it applies, ii. 88, 89.
 - what he may do under it, ii. 87.
 - against whom it does, or not prevail, ii. 89.
 - what notice sufficient to give it effect, ii. 88, 89.
 - by what acts defeated or waived, ii. 90, 91.
 - how far it passes to assignees, ii. 92.
 - how it may be enforced, ii. 93.
 - vendee's lien for advances, like vendor's, ii. 93.

VII. MORTGAGOR'S RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES,

- has the estate in lands, and all incidents, ii. 152.

MORTGAGES — Continued.

may mortgage, sell, or devise it, ii. 152.
 his interest liable for his debts, ii. 153.
 his will not affected by making mortgage, ii. 152.
 his estate subject to dower and curtesy, ii. 157.
 if disseised, mortgagee's rights affected, ii. 158.
 he may claim damages for land taken, ii. 155.
 is to be taxed for the land, ii. 156.
 of the right, as to each other, if joint, ii. 136, 166.
 of the tenure between, and mortgagee, 435; ii. 160.
 may not dispute mortgagee's title, ii. 159, 285.
 not liable to mortgagee for rent, 435; ii. 130.
 when liable to mortgagee for trespass, ii. 128.
 what defenses he may set up against mortgagee, ii. 225.
 of leased land, when entitled to the rent, ii. 131.
 cannot disseise mortgagee, ii. 158.
 his assignee has his rights, ii. 110.
 when paying debt, defeats the mortgage, ii. 152.
 may pay mortgagee, till notified of assignment, ii. 140.
 how far notified by record of assignment, ii. 140.
 heir of, entitled to surplus after debt paid, ii. 152.
 remedy of, to regain possession of estate, ii, 122, 161.
 cannot redeem till debt is due, ii. 166.
 how he may enforce equity of redemption, ii. 162.
 takes the estate when redeemed, as it is, ii. 183.
 how barred by statute of limitation, ii. 169, 170.
 liable to purchaser of equity in trespass, ii. 153.
 his and mortgagee's interest, when merge, ii. 180.
 cannot call on purchaser for contribution, ii. 188.
 when subrogated to place of mortgagee, ii. 200.
 how far his personal relieves his mortgaged real, ii. 184 – 186.
 may insure premises for his own use, ii. 213.
 he and mortgagee, not tenant and landlord, 435.

VIII. MORTGAGEE'S RIGHTS AND DUTIES,

how the law regards his interest an estate, ii. 95, 127.
 how equity regards his interest, ii. 96.
 before condition broken, a personal interest, ii. 96.
 how different States regard his interest, ii. 100 – 104, 113, 114.
 in what States he holds it as real estate, ii. 104, 105.
 when he may have trespass against mortgagor, ii. 128.
 cannot claim rent of mortgagor, 435, ii. 130.
 when he can have waste, ii. 127.
 how he may stay waste by mortgagor, ii. 129.
 how far himself liable for waste, ii. 128.
 his wife not entitled to dower, 190, ii. 133.
 how far he is a trustee of mortgagor, ii. 68, 116.

MORTGAGES—Continued.

- effect on his rights, to bid in, on sale for taxes, ii. 116.
- how to exercise power of sale in mortgagee, ii. 68, 73, 76.
- when he may purchase, if estate is sold under power, ii. 68, 76, 77.
- may purchase of the mortgagor, ii. 67.
- cannot purchase, if he himself sells, ii. 76, 77.
- may sell under a power, after mortgagor's death, ii. 73.
- need not join mortgagor in making sale, ii. 74.
- may have right of pre-emption by agreement, ii. 68.
- his title to the estate a legal one, ii. 127.
- he may bring a writ of entry, when, ii. 120.
- how his right of entry may be restricted, ii. 109.
- different modes of enforcing the rights of, ii. 97, 98, 100, 103.
- is regarded in equity as a purchaser, ii. 90.
- a second, is as to the first, assignee of mortgagor, ii. 110.
- his interest, a right to gain, rather than an *estate*, ii. 116.
- how he can assign his interest, ii. 111 – 115.
- after assignment, he cannot discharge mortgage, ii. 124.
- by assigning, he conveys real estate, ii. 112.
- may do it by deed, or by mortgage, ii. 112, 113.
- in some States, can only do it by deed, ii. 113, 114.
- must assign the debt specifically, in some States, ii. 114.
- in what States passing the debt, passes the estate, ii. 106.
- when he may elect, of several parcels, ii. 124, 195.
- when equity restrains him, in the order of election, ii. 201 – 203.
- what are the five stages of mortgagee's title, ii. 150, 151.
- effect of payment of debt on right of possession, ii. 122, 123.
- he can only enforce, for amount due, ii. 125.
- his rights to rent and possession against a tenant, ii. 129 – 133.
- when he may safely release part of premises, ii. 125.
- may not release a part, when notified of other claims, ii. 124, 125.
- record of the second mortgagor not notice to the first, ii. 125.
- when he cannot change the *pro rata* burden, ii. 124, 195.
- is not obliged to receive debt in parcels, ii. 196.
- his interest passes by a devise, ii. 133.
- when he may claim damages for land taken, ii. 155.
- is not affected by mortgagor's release of damages, ii. 156.
- when covenant of warranty to mortgagor, enures to him, ii. 159.
- when and how barred by statute of limitations, ii. 170, 171 ; iii. 133.
- by foreclosure, he becomes absolute owner, ii. 150.
- may waive foreclosure, by suing debt, ii. 150.
- his interest at death, goes to executors, ii. 134, 135.
- if surety, creditor may be substituted to his place, ii. 199.
- may insure for his own benefit, ii. 213.
- how, and for what, he is to account, ii. 204 – 207.
- when accountable for actual rents only, ii. 206.

MORTGAGES — Continued.

not bound to speculate, to raise rent, ii. 207.
 how far to account for rent on improvements, ii. 207.
 when he may, and when bound, to repair or rebuild, ii. 216.
 how far he may charge for services, ii. 216.
 must apply rents toward mortgage debt, ii. 218.
 order of applying rents to several mortgages, ii. 218.
 order of applying rents to repairs and debt, ii. 218.
 in what cases he is charged interest, ii. 210, 217.
 in what cases rents made in account, ii. 217, 218.
 rule, as to accounting for, and charging insurance, ii. 212 – 215.
 when, as holder of the equity, he is to apply rents, ii. 210.
 allowing mortgagor to hold rents against a second, ii. 208 – 210.
 may sue for debt and foreclosure, each by itself, ii. 224, 227, 228.
 second may foreclose as to third, &c. ii. 224.

IX. MERGER,

of interests of mortgagor and mortgagee, ii. 180.
 legal and equitable estates merge, when, ii. 180.
 estates, to merge, must be permanent, ii. 181.
 no merger, if an intervening estate, ii. 182.
 must be a union in same person, in same right, ii. 182.
 none, against the intention of the holder, ii. 181, 182.

X. REDEMPTION, EQUITY OF,

its origin, ii. 40, 41, 96.
 not mentioned by Coke, ii. 41.
 first case of, in England, ii. 41.
 is an estate in lands, with all its incidents, ii. 152, 153.
 assignment of a defeasance, a conveyance of, ii. 46.
 may be mortgaged, and subject to debts, ii. 152, 153.
 when equity regards it, though not created by deed, ii. 47.
 is now a part of the law, ii. 96.
 no agreement, at making of mortgage, controls it, ii. 66, 67.
 equity relieves against attempts to curtail it, ii. 68.
 subsequent sale to, or agreement with, mortgagee good, ii. 67.
 exists in power of sale mortgages, till sale made, ii. 78.
 none exists in trust mortgages, ii. 82.
 each of several mortgages has its own, ii. 168.
 the right, not affected by disseisin of the estate, ii. 167.
 how applied in conditions for support, ii. 72.
 how enforced by mortgagor, ii. 162.
 by whom it may be exercised, 163, 164.
 how far purchaser of, personally liable for mortgage debt, ii. 110, 193 – 195.
 how kept from merging in mortgagee's right, ii. 183.
 widow's right in, and how enforced, 192; ii. 196.
 availed of, only by payment of the debt, ii. 164, 165.

MORTGAGES — Continued.

- cannot be exercised till debt is due, ii. 166.
- order of, where several have the right, ii. 167.
- how far exercised, in respect to one of two or more mortgages, ii. 167.
- is not affected by statute bar of the debt, ii. 165.
- how the right may be barred by the statute of limitations, ii. 169.
- of contribution towards, by several, ii. 186 – 194.
- how far personal bound to aid the real in, ii. 184 – 186.
- if exercised, in what condition mortgagor takes the estate, ii. 167, 183.
- of parties to the suit, to enforce, ii. 168.
- of costs in such suit, ii. 169.

XI. FORECLOSURE, AND ITS EFFECTS.

- effect on mortgagor's right, ii. 219.
- carries the growing crops, 124.
- makes mortgagee absolute owner, ii. 149, 220, 238.
- when it acts as a new purchase, ii. 134.
- joint mortgagees become tenants in common, ii. 136.
- various modes of effecting, ii. 219.
- effect of a strict foreclosure, ii. 220, 222.
- of foreclosure by entry, *in pais*, &c. ii. 223.
- effect of foreclosure by sale, ii. 220 – 222.
- form and effect of proceedings by entry, &c. ii. 223, 231, 238.
- effect of, of a mortgage of a mortgage, ii. 42.
- how applied, in case of equitable mortgages, ii. 86.
- may be applied to mortgages, with powers of sale, ii. 78.
- in case of breach of one of several conditions, ii. 226.
- effect of, upon a devise of the mortgage, ii. 134.
- how far it is payment of the debt secured, ii. 117.
- effect of, upon a suit to recover the debt, ii. 150, 222.
- how barred by statute of limitations, ii. 219.
- how it may be waived, ii. 150, 222, 223, 237.
- how entry to foreclose, waived, ii. 223.
- in joint mortgages, who to maintain the suit for, ii. 136, 233, 234.
- receiver of mortgagee in one State, cannot foreclose in another, ii. 233.
- who should be parties to proceedings, ii. 228 – 234.
- who barred by a foreclosure, ii. 228, 229.
- how far mortgagee's title open to question, in suit to foreclose, ii. 235.
- effect on the estate, of foreclosure by executors, ii. 235, 238.
- how far infants and *femes covert* bound by, ii. 232, 236.
- laws as to, of the several States, ii. 238 – 247.

(See the STATES severally.)

MOVABLE THINGS,

- a division of property by the civil law, 3.
- when they may be realty, 10, 11.

N.

NAKED, OR COLLATERAL POWER,

what is, ii. 594.

NAMES,

purposes of, in a deed, and how designated, iii. 236.

senior and *junior*, no parts of one, iii. 238.

omitting part of a Christian name, effect of, iii. 239.

grantor estopped, to deny the name he uses, iii. 238.

NAVIGABLE STREAMS,

what are, iii. 358.

distinction between public and navigable, iii. 236.

how far applied in matters of boundary, iii. 355, 356.

rules as to boundaries by, of lands, iii. 358.

rules as to islands formed in, iii. 55 - 58.

NECESSARIES,

when contract for a lease, may be for, 406.

NECESSITY,

way of, what is, ii. 282.

how far essential to an easement, on dividing heritages, ii. 288 - 290.

NEGATIVE,

easements, what are, ii. 277.

NEMO EST HÆRES VIVENTIS, iii. 6.

NEW HAMPSHIRE,

Aliens, may hold lands, 64.

Attachment, on mesne process, a lien, ii. 29.

Advances, future mortgage for, not good, ii. 145.

Advancement, laws of, iii. 40.

Agents, how public may execute deeds, iii. 251.

Boundary, proved by oral declaration, iii. 365.

Bargain and sale, a form of deeds, ii. 414.

Children, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.

Contingent remainders, peculiar law of, ii. 508.

Curtesy, allowed, 150.

not forfeited by conveyance, 168.

Contributing, order of, in redeeming estates, ii. 191.

Disseisin, of husband, how wife affected by, 166, 167.

Dower, not had in wild lands, 195.

may be released by separate deed, 281; iii. 229.

action for, limited to twenty years, 249.

of what husband dies seised, 252.

damages recovered in action for, 266.

tenant of, liable for waste, 143.

Disseisee, cannot convey lands, iii. 294.

Deeds, must be signed and sealed, iii. 244.

two witnesses required for, ii. 413; iii. 248.

NEW HAMPSHIRE — *Continued.*

- Deeds*, how public agents may execute, iii. 251.
 - valid, though not recorded, with notice, iii. 29.
 - what consideration sufficient for, iii. 323.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 30.
- Divorce*, effect on wife's lands, 292.
- Damages*, in case of eviction of a warrantee, iii. 428.
- Equitable estates*, liable for debts, ii. 456.
- Ejectment*, lies by mortgagee, ii. 100, 120.
- Execution*, levy of, ii. 30.
- Estates tail*, how far abolished, 99.
 - tenants in, can convey a fee, 99.
- Foreclosure suit*, who parties to, ii. 230.
 - of mortgage, how effected, ii. 245.
- Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far in force, 556.
- Leases*, what necessary to a good one, 394.
 - how executed by agents, 395.
 - parol creates an estate at will, 395, 531.
 - what must be recorded, 410.
- Legislative*, grants of lands, iii. 187.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 156.
- Mortgagee*, how far liable on covenants, 456.
- Mortgages*, pass freeholds, ii. 100.
 - cannot be proved by parol, ii. 53.
 - not good for future advances, ii. 145.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 245.
 - tender of debt discharges the lien, ii. 162.
 - how assigned, ii. 114, 118.
- Married woman*, may release dower by her deed, 231; iii. 229.
 - need not be examined to acknowledge a deed, 234; iii. 229.
 - rights and powers of, 321.
 - may make a will, iii. 434.
- Partition*, how made, 456.
- Proprietors* of common lands, power of, 587.
- Recoveries*, once in use, 99.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Uses*, applied in conveyance of lands, 415.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 256.
- Waste*, actions for, form of, 144.
- Will*, estate at, how determined by notice, 528.
- Wills* require to be sealed, iii. 431.
 - pass after-acquired estate, iii. 432.
 - married women may make, iii. 434.
 - how many witnesses required, iii. 430.
- Witnesses*, two required for a deed, iii. 248.

NEW JERSEY,

- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64.
- Bargain and sale*, form of deed, ii. 420.
- Boundary*, how far reputation may show, iii. 365.
- Custom*, of tenants as to crops, 123.
- Courtesy*, recognized and applied, 150.
 - tenant by, forfeits by conveying a fee, 107.
- Creditors*, rights of, subordinate to dower, 239.
- Co-tenants*, liable in damages to each other, 558, 591.
- Common*, tenant in, liable for waste, 591.
- Contribution*, order of to redeem estates, ii. 191.
- Covenant*, what requisite to action by warrantee, iii. 406.
 - what damages recoverable in, iii. 423.
- Charitable uses*, in force, iii. 439.
- Children*, posthumous, law as to, iii. 44.
- Descent*, law of, iii. 32.
 - half-blood inherit, iii. 15.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Damages*, recoverable on covenants of warranty, iii. 428.
- Deeds*, what work estoppels, iii. 104.
 - must be acknowledged to be evidence, iii. 248.
 - time in which to be recorded, iii. 287.
 - what constitutes recording, iii. 285.
 - when recorded, may be used in evidence, iii. 288.
 - deposit of, creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Devise*, what estate passes by, 75.
 - whether in lieu of dower, 308.
 - when wife is to elect, or dower, 308.
- Descent*, of estate *per autre vie*, 109.
- Dower*, is of all husband was seised of, 251.
 - tenant forfeits by conveying a fee, 107.
 - how set out, 260.
 - damages recovered in suit for, 266.
 - when demand necessary to a suit, 261.
 - limitation of action for, twenty years, 249.
 - forfeited by elopement, 294.
- Deposit*, of deeds, creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Estates tail*, life estates with remainder, 100.
 - per autre vie*, descent of, 109.
 - executory, how far alienable, ii. 553.
 - at will, how determined by notice, 527.
- Estoppel*, what deeds work, iii. 104.
- Execution*, levy of, on land, ii. 30.
- Fines*, abolished, 85.
- Fires*, statute of Anne, in force, 136.

NEW JERSEY — *Continued.*

- Half-blood*, may inherit, iii. 15, 32.
- Heirs*, necessary to create a fee in wills, 41.
- Joint estates*, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far in force, 556.
- Judgments*, form liens on land, ii. 28.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 156.
- Leases*, how signed by agents, 395.
 - what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 322.
- Mortgages*, may be proved by parol, ii. 53.
 - title by, divested by payment, ii. 123.
 - order of contributing, to redeem, ii. 191.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 243, 245.
- Notice*, what determines estates at will, 527.
- Partition*, how made, 598.
- Payment of debt*, defeats a mortgage, ii. 123.
- Prescription*, exists for light and air, ii. 318.
- Rent*, recognized, ii. 256.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Recoveries*, abolished, 85.
- Recording*, deeds, time allowed for, iii. 287.
- Socage*, free and common, prevails, 55.
- Statute of Anne*, as to fires, in force, 136.
 - 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 28, in force, 579.
- Scroll*, does not answer for a seal, iii. 247.
- Uses*, applied in conveyances, ii. 416.
- Vendor's lien*, for purchase-money, ii. 92.
- Will*, what witnesses to, required, iii. 430.
- Waste*, action for, form of, 138, 143.
- Widow's quarantine*, what, 255.

NEW YORK,

- Attorney*, wife may make a deed by, iii. 233.
- Alienage*, law as to, 64.
- Accumulation*, law as to, ii. 683.
- Attornment*, Statute of Anne, in force, ii. 686.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 40.
- Bargain and sale*, consideration for, iii. 326.
- Bargain and sale, in futuro*, of freehold, iii. 326.
- Confiscation*, of lands in, iii. 188.
- Consideration*, for bargain and sale, iii. 321.
- Covenants*, none implied in deeds, iii. 416.
 - may be implied in leases, iii. 416.
 - damages for breach of warranty, iii. 423.
 - and conditions, how far assignable, 432.
- Charitable uses*, how far in force, iii. 440.

NEW YORK — *Continued.*

- Contingent*, future estates, how created, ii. 550.
- Children*, posthumous, rights of, ii. 552; iii. 44.
- Conveyance*, works no forfeiture, 107.
- Curtesy*, allowed, 150.
 - how forfeited or barred, 168, 169.
- Common*, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.
- Contribution*, to redeem estates, order of, ii. 191.
- Corporations*, how far may be devisees, iii. 435.
- Devise*, what estate it carries, 75.
 - to executors to sell, a power, ii. 602.
 - when in lieu of dower, 308.
 - how far corporations may take by, iii. 435.
- Deeds*, forms of, in use, iii. 313, 316.
 - must be attested and acknowledged, to be used, iii. 248.
 - when recorded, may be evidence, iii. 288.
 - deposit of, when it creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Disseisee*, cannot convey, iii. 294.
- Distress* for rent, abolished, ii. 256.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 31.
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689.
 - of estates, *per autre vie*, 109.
 - of expectant estates, ii. 552, 663.
- Dower*, may be had in wild lands, 129.
 - may be in equitable estates, 191.
 - barred by husband's deed, before marriage, 203.
 - not barred by elopement, 228.
 - may be of all husband was seised, 251.
 - limitation of actions for, twenty years, 249.
 - set out by decree of surrogate, 259.
 - ejectment, the form of action for, 263.
 - damages recoverable for alienation, 266.
 - how estimated upon aliened estates, 273, 275.
 - how determined in exchanged estates, 185.
- Damages*, mortgagee claims for lands taken, ii. 155.
 - recoverable by warrantee, if evicted, iii. 423.
 - recoverable by a dowress, 266.
- Divorce*, effect of, on wife's rights, 292, 294.
- Enrolment*, statute of, never in force, iii. 326.
- Equitable* estates, liable for debts, ii. 556.
- Estates*, for life, after estates for years, how limited, ii. 551.
- Expectant* estates, descend, and are alienable, ii. 552, 663.
- Estates tail*, abolished, 100.
- Exchange* of lands, recognized, 185.
- Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 30.
 - levy of, on mortgagor's interest, ii. 155.

NEW YORK — *Continued.*

- Ejectment*, will not lie on mortgage, ii. 107.
lies to recover dower, 263.
- Foreclosure*, who parties to, ii. 231, 232.
suing for, and for the debt, ii. 226, 227.
- Fines*, abolished, 85.
- Fires* in woods, law as to, 136.
- Heirs*, not requisite to a fee, 41.
- Jointure*, who parties to, 300.
what bars dower, 305.
- Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 555.
tenancies, how far in force, 556.
- Judgment*, forms a lien on land, ii. 28.
- Leases*, how signed by agents, 395.
what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
what required to be recorded, 410.
- Lineal and Collateral* warranty, abolished, iii. 408.
- Limitation*, upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
of real actions, iii. 156.
- Lands, public*, State successor to the crown, of, iii. 170.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 322.
must be parties to foreclosure suits, 235.
- Mortgages*, proved to be by parol, ii. 53.
for future advances, ii. 144.
tender of debt discharges, ii. 162.
may be discharged on record, ii. 178.
contribution to redeem, order of, ii. 191.
how foreclosed, ii. 221, 240, 241.
in sales under, mortgagees may bid, ii. 77.
how assigned, ii. 114.
sale under must be public, ii. 78.
- Manors*, how created here, iii. 171.
- Mortgagee*, may have case against mortgagor, ii. 129.
may claim land damages, ii. 155.
- Mines*, State has sovereignty over, iii. 340.
- Notice*, what to determine estate at will, 527.
- People of State*, successors to lands of the crown, iii. 170.
- Payment*, divests mortgagee's interest, ii. 162.
- Purchase-money*, forms a lien, ii. 88, 92.
- Partition*, may be of remainders, &c. 584.
of estates in common, 595.
- Perpetuity*, laws as to, ii. 681, 682.
- Prescription*, none for light or air, ii. 318.
- Quia emptores*, adopted here, iii. 171.
- Rent reserved*, a rent charge only, ii. 252, 256.
- Remainder*, not affected by change in prior estate, ii. 550.

NEW YORK — *Continued.*

- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Statute*, 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 28, in force, 579.
 - quia emptores*, in force, iii. 171.
- State*, has sovereignty over mines, iii. 340.
- Trusts*, law as to, ii. 492 – 495.
- Tax*, if tenant for life refuse to pay, effect of, 112.
- Uses*, how far abolished or in use, ii. 418, 419.
- Wife*, separate deed of good, iii. 231.
 - must be examined before acknowledging, iii. 231.
 - may make a deed by attorney, iii. 233.
 - must be made party to a foreclosure, ii. 232.
- Wills*, what witnesses to required, iii. 431.
 - may be signed by mark of testator, iii. 428.
 - may pass after-acquired estate, iii. 432.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 256.
- Warrants*, breach of, damages for, iii. 423.
- Waste*, form of action for, 138, 143, 144.

NIL HABUIT, &c.,

- application and extent of the rule, 485, 486.
- when tenant may plead it, 487 – 489.
- applies to use and occupation, as well as leases, 486.
- applies to one hiring his own estate, 485.
- does not apply, if lessor is not in possession, 484, 485.

NON COMPOS MENTIS,

- leases by persons, 400, 401.
- how far bound by their contracts, 400.
- may be made lessees, 406.
- of deeds by, and to, iii. 224 – 227, 240.

NON USER,

- effect of, on easements, ii. 312.
- has no effect if gained by grant, ii. 312, 340.
- may bar one gained by prescription, ii. 312.
- open to explanation, ii. 312.
- not of itself an abandonment of a right, ii. 340.

NORTH CAROLINA,

- Aliens* may not hold lands, 64.
- Advancement*, laws as to, iii. 41.
- Apportioning*, between tenant for life and remainder, 110.
- Boundary*, proved by hearsay, iii. 365.
- Curtesy*, allowed, 150.
 - may be had in equitable estates, 152.
- Contributing* to redeem, order of, ii. 191.
- Children*, posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
 - illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 43.
- Charitable uses*, in force, iii. 438.

NORTH CAROLINA — *Continued.*

Covenants, none implied in deeds, iii. 416.

Devise, what estate it carries, 75.

whether in lieu of dower, 308.

when wife may elect, or dower, 308.

Descent, general laws of, iii. 83.

of estates, *per autre vie*, 109.

how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689 ; iii. 14.

how far half-blood inherit, iii. 15.

Deeds, good if only sealed, iii. 244.

of wife, void if not acknowledged, iii. 229.

in what time recorded, iii. 288.

if recorded, used in evidence, iii. 288.

Disseisee, cannot convey lands, iii. 294.

Damages, in case of eviction on covenant, iii. 423.

Dower, had in wild lands, 129.

had in equitable estates, 191.

of all husband was seised of, 252.

how to be set out, 260.

damages in action for, 266.

may be in lands bargained for, 220.

if claimed by deed, must be recorded, 201.

barred by elopement, 228, 294.

not defeated by fraudulent deed of husband, 230, 252.

action for, not barred by statute, 250.

Distress for rent, abolished, ii. 356.

Estate tail, changed to a fee, 99.

Execution, levy of on mortgagor's estate, ii. 154.

Frauds, statute of, never adopted, ii. 465.

Heirs, when requisite to a fee, 41.

Half-blood, how far heirs, iii. 15.

Joint tenancies, how far in force, 556.

Leases, what must be recorded, 411.

what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.

Life, chances of, how calculated, 110.

Legacy, to a witness, does not avoid a devise, iii. 431.

Limitation, of real actions, iii. 157.

Mortgages, proved by parol, ii. 54.

when they take effect as to creditors, ii. 137.

redemption of, barred by time, ii. 170.

order of contributing, to redeem, ii. 191.

how foreclosed, ii. 242.

claims of mortgagee, when barred, ii. 172.

Married women, husbands cannot lease lands of, 323.

Notice, to determine estates at will, 527.

Partners, rights of to land, survive, 575.

NORTH CAROLINA — Continued.

- Partition*, how made of estates, 599.
- Purchase-money*, forms a lien, ii. 88.
- Parties*, to foreclosure suits, ii. 232.
- Scroll*, a good substitute for a seal, iii. 247.
- Trusts*, declared by parol, ii. 465.
- Uses*, applied in conveyances, ii. 411.
- Waste*, action for, form of, 138, 143.
- Will*, estate at, how determined, 527.
- Wills*, pass after-acquired estate, iii. 432.
how many witnesses required, iii. 430.
- Witness*, legacy to in a will, not void, iii. 431.

NORTHERLY,

- means due north, iii. 351.

NOTICE,

- to tenants at will to quit, 506, 510, 516, 525–528.
- to tenants from year to year, 522–528.
- how long required in such cases, 526, 527.
- how to be served, in such cases, 527.
- none requisite to tenant at sufferance, 541.
- from assignee of lease to lessor, why necessary, 455.
- when record is notice of terms of lease, 455.
- of vendor's lien, what is, ii. 88, 89.
- when made to agent, is to principal, ii. 89.
- a volunteer purchaser cannot set up want of, ii. 89.
- by assignee of a mortgage, to mortgagor, necessary, ii. 140.
- to whom record of assignment of, is a notice, ii. 140.
- how far record of second mortgage is notice to the first, ii. 148.
- how this affects future advances, ii. 147, 148.
- actual, requisite to prior one for future advances, ii. 146–148.
- how far *lis pendens* is notice, ii. 140.
- record of a deed is notice of it to all, iii. 282.
- effect of, of an existing unrecorded deed, ii. 66; iii. 289, 290.
- how far open possession is notice of an existing deed, iii. 283, 284.
- reference to other deeds, notice of their contents, iii. 292.

NUISANCE,

- on leased premises, who responsible for, 356, 469, 470.
- interference with a ferry is, ii. 270.
- how far one ferry is to another, ii. 270.

O.**OATH OF FEALTY,**

- by tenant, to his feudal lord, 31.
- how distinguished from oath of allegiance, 31.
- taken by landholders in England, to William I. 33, n.

OBSTRUCTING,

- water-courses, rules against, ii. 320, 321, 323.

OCCUPANCY,

- what the doctrine of, is, and when applied, 107, 108.
- right of, regulated by statute, 108, 109, n.; iii. 50.
- by adjacent owners, to division fences, effect of, iii. 142.

OFFICES,

- no property in, in United States, ii. 250.

OFFICE FOUND,

- process in escheat, in what it consists, iii. 47.

OFFICE GRANT,

- to what conveyances applied, iii. 191.
- sales by executors, &c. for payment of debts, iii. 191, 192.
- policy of the law in favor of creditors, iii. 191.
- sales by guardians, under license of court, iii. 192.
- sales by acts of legislature, how far legal, iii. 198 - 199.
- if in exercise of judicial power, void, iii. 195.
- cannot be of private property of one not under disability, iii. 195.
- may confirm defective titles, iii. 197.
- may be good, if of one under personal disability, iii. 197 - 199.
- may authorize sale to pay debts, iii. 197, 199.
- sales by decree, in chancery, iii. 199, 200.
- effect of judicial sales of land, iii. 200.
- decree of sale does not carry title till executed, iii. 201.
- sales under mechanic's liens, iii. 201.
- sales in collection of taxes, iii. 202 - 209.
- taxation, power of, a part of sovereignty, iii. 202.
- power to sell for taxes, a valid one, iii. 202, 203.
- every requisite fact must concur and appear, iii. 203 - 205.
- how far recitals in a tax deed of any effect, iii. 206, 207.
- "collector's title," a doubtful one, iii. 205.
- collector's deed estops no one, iii. 206.
- what tax deeds must contain to be valid, iii. 207.
- deed must be to the one who bids off the land, iii. 208.
- how far record necessary to give effect, iii. 208.
- land sold for, subject to redemption, iii. 208.
- sales by proprietaries, for assessments, iii. 209.
- rules of law to be strictly followed, to give effect to office grant, iii. 210.
- how far returns of ministerial officers evidence of acts done, iii. 211.

OHIO,

- Alienage*, no disability, 64.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Assignee*, of covenant may sue, 434.
- Boundary*, not proved by reputation, iii. 365.
- Curtesy*, had without issue, 151.
- what seisin necessary for, 160.
- Covenant*, assignee of, may sue, 434.
- none implied in a deed, iii. 416.

OHIO — *Continued.*

- Co-tenant*, may convey by metes and bounds, 565.
- Common*, tenant in, liable for waste, 591.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42, 43.
 - posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
 - of marriage annulled, legitimate, iii. 44.
- Charitable uses*, in force here, iii. 439.
- Conveyances*, how far uses applied in, ii. 417.
- Dower*, of all seised of during coverture, 251.
 - allowed in estate bargained for, 191.
 - right of, subordinate to tax sales, 239.
 - action for, limited to twenty-one years, 249.
 - no damages recoverable in, 265.
 - lost by elopement, 294.
- Distress*, not allowed for rent, ii. 257.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 33.
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689; iii. 14.
- Damages*, recovered by warrantee, iii. 423.
- Deed*, requires to be signed, iii. 244.
 - affixing a mark a good signing, iii. 244.
 - must have two witnesses, iii. 247.
 - executed by a scroll good as a seal, iii. 247.
 - what amounts to recording of, iii. 285.
 - time for recording given, iii. 287.
 - must be acknowledged to pass a title, iii. 288.
 - good though made on Sunday, iii. 295.
 - of quitclaim, a conveyance, iii. 312.
 - under a tax title, what must be shown as to, iii. 204.
- Disseisee*, may convey lands, iii. 295.
- Estates tail*, issue takes a fee, 100.
- Execution*, levy of, on land, ii. 31.
- Ejectment*, lies by mortgagee, ii. 101.
- Husband and wife*, tenants in common, 580.
- Judgment*, a lien on land, ii. 28.
- Joint tenancies*, how far exist, 557.
- Land warrants*, pass to heirs, iii. 182.
- Lease*, what necessary to a good one, 394.
 - how signed by agents, 395.
 - parol, create estates at will, 395, 531.
 - Stat. 32, Hen. VIII., ch. 34, never adopted, 433, 434.
- Married women*, power and rights of, 323.
 - may make wills, iii. 433.
 - must be examined in making acknowledgment, iii. 229.
- Mortgages*, may be proved by parol, ii. 54.
 - form only a lien, ii. 102.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.

OHIO — Continued.

- Mortgages*, when they become a lien, ii. 138.
- may be discharged on record, ii. 178.
- contribution to redeem order of, ii. 191.
- Partition*, how made, 597.
- Perpetuity*, rule of, ii. 682.
- Quitclaim* deed, a conveyance, iii. 312.
- Rent*, hardly known here, ii. 255.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished in wills, ii. 563.
- Tenant for life*, forfeits estate for not paying taxes, 112.
- Witnesses*, required for wills, iii. 431.
- Waste*, action for, forms of, 144, 591.

OMISSION,

- to mention a child, effect of on a will, iii. 19.

OPENING,

- of remainders, to let in new members of a class, ii. 511, 512.

OR,

- when used for and meaning *and*, ii. 656.

OUTSTANDING TERMS,

- how created, and character of, 408.
- satisfied, how used as muniments of title, 408–410.
- to attend the inheritance, abolished, 409.
- never in use in United States, 409, 410.

OUSTER,

- what is, iii. 135.

(See POSSESSION, &c.)

OWELTY OF PARTITION,

- in what it consisted, 582.

OWNERSHIP, DOUBLE,

- in soil and mines, 12.
- may be held by different persons, 12.
- may be of a mere easement in, 12, 13.

P.**PARCENARY, 560.**

(See COPARCENARY.)

PARES CURIÆ,

- who they were, and what their duty, 35, 45, 60.
- parol agreement to convey land enforced in equity, iii. 215.

PAROL EVIDENCE,

- when competent to prove a deed a mortgage, ii. 50–58.
- competent to show when a deed or defeasance made, ii. 59, 60.
- competent to show amount of consideration of a deed, ii. 406; iii. 326,–329.
- admissible to identify monuments in a deed, iii. 363.

PAROL LEASES,

how far binding, 531.

PAROL LICENSE,

coupled with a grant, not revocable, 544.

executed on licensee's own land, not revocable, 550.

until executed, is revocable, 543.

not, if connected with personal property on licensor's land, 549.

PARSON,

when corporation sole, 73.

his interest in glebe lands, 73.

grant to, if a fee must be to him and "successors," 73.

PARTICULAR ESTATE,

in case of remainders, what it is, 61 ; ii. 501, 513.

possession by tenant of, not adverse to remainder-man, ii. 514.

PARTIES,

to deeds, who may be, iii. 224 - 234.

to leases, who may be, 400 - 404.

to foreclosure of mortgages, who must be, ii. 228, 232.

when wife must be, to be bound by, ii. 232.

PARTITION,

how made between joint tenants, 560.

how made between coparceners, 562.

may be made by tenants in common, 581.

incident only to parceners at common law, 581.

how incident to all joint estates, 581.

when made, carries growing crops, 571.

of proceedings for, by action at common law, 580 - 583.

now exercised by equity, in England, 581, 582.

parts may be equalized by owelty of, 582.

proceedings in, are local, 582.

effect of, by parol, followed by possession, 581, 587, 588.

when presumed, from long occupation, 588.

a petition for, a proceeding *in rem*, 582.

each has the same estate in his share, as he held in the joint estate, 73.

what estate one must have to enforce it, 583, 584.

mortgagor cannot have, against his mortgagee, ii. 158.

one must have seisin and right of possession, 583.

when remainder-man may have it, 584.

how far one disseised may have it, 585.

reversioner and remainder-man not affected by act of tenant in, 583, 584.

effect of covenants of tenants, not to make, 583.

binds mortgagee or grantee of one tenant, if made *pendente lite*, 583.

mortgagors, but not mortgagees, may have, 584.

who must be made parties to, 585.

PARTITION — *Continued.*

- disseisee not bound by proceedings with his disseisor, 585.
- nor mortgagee, by proceedings with mortgagor, ii. 158.
- how to be made, of several parcels, 585.
- how, of mines, mills, and water-power, &c. 585, 586.
- of proceedings for, in probate courts, 586.
- who bound by, 586.
- how made by the parties, 587.
- made by proprietors of common lands by vote, 587.
- words of inheritance required in deeds of, 73.
- how far each warrants to the other, 589, 590.
- each to aid the other in defending his title, 589, 590.
- after made, one does not hold under the other, 589.
- one cannot set up against the other a prior title, 590.
- when made by law, each tenant is the other's warrantor, 590.
- one evicted of a share, may, at his election, have a new one, 590.
- does not extend to his alienee, 590.
- one may recover damages, if evicted of his share, 591.
- laws of the States as to, 591 – 602.

PARTNERSHIP,

- estate in, how far subject to dower, 186 – 188, 573 – 576.
- how constituted, and its incidents, 573 – 576.
- how far regarded as personal estate, 575.
- survivorship applies only, so far as necessary to pay debts, 576.
- except as to creditors, are estates in common, 574, 576.
- if deed taken in name of one, he is trustee for all, 574.
- lease by one partner, enures to all, 573.
- descends to heirs, if not needed for creditors, 576.

PART PERFORMANCE,

- when the ground of a decree, iii. 215.

PARTY WALLS,

- as an easement, what are, and rights of, ii. 276, 334.
- how far adjacent proprietors own in common, ii. 334.

PATENT OF LAND,

- what it is, and how granted, iii. 167.
- (See PUBLIC GRANT.)

PAYMENT,

- of a mortgage, when an assignment, ii. 125, 126.
- when and how far it extinguishes the mortgage, ii. 122, 123.

PENDENTE LITE, ii. 140.(See *LIS PENDENS*.)

- purchaser bound to take notice of, ii. 229.
- he need not be made party to a foreclosure of mortgage, ii. 229.
- is bound by the judgment between the original parties, ii. 229.
- is bound by partition between parties, 584.

PENSIONS,

- no property in, in United States, ii. 250.

PENNSYLVANIA,

- Allodial*, property in lands, 54.
- Alienage*, no disability, 64.
- Accumulation* limited, how far, ii. 684.
- Attornment*, statute of Anne, in force, ii. 686.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Bargain and sale*, a form in use, ii. 420.
- Boundary*, how far proved by hearsay, iii. 365.
- Birth* of a child, revokes a will, iii. 459.
- Custom*, of tenants, as to crops, 123.
- Curtesy*, what seisin requisite for, 160.
not forfeited by conveyance, 168.
- Condition*, rights under, may be conveyed, ii. 12.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
- Covenants*, what words imply in a deed, iii. 417.
- Contributing* to redeem mortgages, order of, ii. 191.
- Charitable Uses*, in force here, iii. 438.
- Dower*, had in wild lands, 129.
may be had in a trust, 192.
subordinate to creditor's claim, 239.
damages recovered in action for, 265, 266.
devise, when in lieu of, 308.
- Deposit* of deeds, creates no lien, ii. 85.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Descent*, laws of, iii. 34.
how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689; iii. 14.
- Deed*, requires to be signed, iii. 244.
if recorded, may be used in evidence, iii. 288.
- Disseisee*, may convey lands, iii. 295.
- Damages*, for breach of warranty, iii. 423.
- Estates tail*, how barred, 99.
- Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 31.
- Estoppel*, what works one, iii. 72, 77.
- Foreclosure*, suit for and the debt, ii. 227.
- Fines*, formerly in use, 85.
- Husband and wife*, joining in deeds, an early usage, iii. 229.
- Jointure*, what bars dower, 307, 308.
- Joint tenancies*, how far they exist, 556.
- Judgments*, form liens on lands, ii. 29.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
how executed by agents, 395.
Stat. 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 34, in force, 432.
- License*, executed, not revocable, 548.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 158.
upon "failure of issue," ii. 683.

PENNSYLVANIA — Continued.

- Married women*, rights and powers of, 323.
must acknowledge a lease to make it good, 394.
- Mortmain*, statute against, iii. 240.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
how assigned, ii. 113.
writ of *estrepement*, when it lies under, ii. 128.
effect on, of payment of debt, ii. 123.
when they become liens, ii. 138.
order of contributing to redeem, ii. 191.
when mortgagees may charge for services, ii. 217.
how foreclosed, ii. 220, 244.
how applied to successive debts in hands of assignees, ii. 120.
- Notice*, what determines estate at will, 528.
- Purchase-money*, a lien for, ii. 87.
- Prescription*, time of, twenty-one years, ii. 293, 304.
- Proprietary*, owned the soil of, iii. 170.
- Partition*, how made of estates, 597.
- Quia emptores*, statute of, not law here, 195 ; ii. 252.
- Rent*, may be service in fee-farms, ii. 252.
- Record of deeds*, in what time to be made, iii. 287.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, in force, ii. 561.
- Signing*, essential to a deed, iii. 244.
- Scroll*, equivalent to a seal, iii. 247.
- Sovereignty*, as well as soil, in the proprietary, iii. 170.
- Uses*, applied in conveyances, ii. 414.
- Waste*, how prevented, 145.
- Will*, estates at, how determined, 528.
- Wills*, how to be attested, iii. 431.
pass after-acquired estate, iii. 432.
married women may make, iii. 434.
revoked by birth of a child, iii. 459.

PERFORMANCE,

- specific, when enforced, iii. 215.

PER MY ET PER TOUT,

- its meaning, and application, 553.

PERPETUITY,

- reasons and policy of rules against, 97 ; ii. 652.
- borrowed from the terms of strict settlements, ii. 652.
- their introduction remembered by Lord Mansfield, ii. 635.
- what are the rules as to its limits, 97, 386 ; ii. 23, 517, 598, 652.
- it is not enough that an estate may, it must, by its limitation, vest, ii. 653.
- if limited upon two events, it may be good, if one is not too remote,
ii. 654, 665, 667.
- in what cases applied, ii. 23, 24, 517, 588.
- do not apply to charitable trusts, iii. 443.

PERPETUITY — *Continued.*

- apply to terms for years, 386.
- do not apply to estates upon condition, ii. 30.
- do not apply to remainders, ii. 517.
- apply to conditional limitations, ii. 20.
- apply to the execution of powers, ii. 623, 624.
- time of executing should be limited in creating, ii. 625, 626.
- period of, measured from date of deed, or death of deviser, ii. 625, 626, 654.
- limitation to issue, of one unborn, always too remote, ii. 620, 621, 624, 627.
- of the possibility of the execution of a power being too remote, ii. 626.
- the first estate remains good, if a second be too remote, ii. 653.
- of limitation, after "dying without issue," &c. 647, 654 – 661.
- limitation upon failure of issue of one unborn, void, ii. 621.
- tendency of late to construe failure of issue, a definite one, ii. 655 – 657.
- distinction between failure of issue of the first taker, and of a stranger, ii. 655, 658.
- when it creates a remainder, or an executory devise, ii. 658, 659.
- good, if by its terms issue is to fail within twenty-one years after ancestor's death, ii. 660.
- good, if devise over is upon failure of testator's own issue, ii. 667.
- like rule in springing uses, &c. as in executory devises, ii. 660.
- rule more stringent in deeds than wills, ii. 660.
- instances of limitations too remote, ii. 661.
- if an executory limitation be too remote, it is wholly void, ii. 676.
- if void as to part of a class, void as to the whole, ii. 676 – 678.
- devises for accumulation, ii. 679.
- Thellusson's will case, and present law, ii. 679, 680.
- American statutes as to perpetuities, ii. 680 – 684.
- as to limitations upon failure of issue, ii. 682.
- as to devises for accumulation, ii. 683.

PERSONAL PROPERTY,

- may assume character of realty, 4 – 7.
- when liable to contribute, to redeem a mortgage, ii. 184 – 186.

PEWS,

- how far real, and how far personal, 20.

PLOUGH BOTE,

- as an estover, 115.

PLYMOUTH,

- and other Colonies, tenure of lands in, 36.

PONDS,

- rules as to, as boundaries of land, iii. 358.
- public may use for fishing, bathing, cutting ice, &c. iii. 186.

POSSESSION AND LIMITATION,

- how possession grows to a title, iii. 115, 116.

POSSESSION AND LIMITATION—*Continued.*

- how far seisin and possession identical, iii. 117, 132.
- constructive, when not in fact, what is, iii. 118.
- seisin, if lost, regained by re-entry, iii. 119.
- difference between disseisin and dispossession, iii. 117.
- of two in possession, he has the seisin who has the title, iii. 117.
- what completes disseisin by feudal and modern law, iii. 116.
- of disseisin, by election of owner, iii. 116, 117.
- case of *Taylor v. Horde*, iii. 120, 121.
- limitations apply only to actual disseisins, iii. 116, 121.
- what acts and intent necessary to constitute actual disseisin, iii. 119, 133, 135.
- does not require force, iii. 129.
- deed, though recorded, does not work a disseisin, unless grantor in possession, iii. 121.
- the estate of a disseisor a fee, iii. 122.
- characteristics and qualities of possession requisite to gain a title, iii. 118, 119, 122, 133, 135, 141.
- acquiescence by owner in tenant's possession essential, iii. 123, 142.
- must be held with intent to claim title, iii. 123, 125, 127, 135.
- must be uninterrupted, iii. 125.
- continuity preserved by several in succession, holding in privity, iii. 126, 130.
- in what cases this applied, iii. 130, 131.
- what is a sufficiently continuous possession, iii. 126.
- what extent of notoriety requisite in the possession, iii. 127.
- whether possession adverse, a question for jury, iii. 127.
- how far entry and holding by mistake can give title, iii. 127.
- how far nature and extent of possession affected by entry, by color of title, iii. 129, 134, 136, 138–140.
- possession presumed to be rightful when entry is, iii. 129.
- in what cases positive disclaimer of title of owner requisite to make possession adverse, iii. 128, 129.
- holding under a void grant, may gain a title, iii. 130.
- possession enough to pass seisin and covenant of warranty, iii. 132.
- possession not adverse to reversion till death of tenant for life, iii. 132.
- wife not barred by disseisin done to husband, iii. 133.
- mortgagee barred by mortgagor's disseisin, ii. 158 ; iii. 133.
- character of acts of possession, depend on situation of property, iii. 135.
- what acts of occupation not sufficient to give exclusive possession, iii. 133, 134.
- what acts of possession carry notice to the owner, iii. 135.
- how far acts of disseisin limited to actual ouster and occupation, iii. 136, 137.

POSSESSION AND LIMITATION — Continued.

- if equivocal, acts presumed not to be hostile to owner, iii. 140.
- effect of occupancy by adjacent owners, bounding on each other, iii. 140.
- effect on title, of occupying up to a division fence, iii. 142.
- occupying under a parol purchase or partition, may gain title, iii. 145.
- how far trustee may be disseised by *cestui que trust*, or a stranger, iii. 144.
- theory of limitation, defeating the title of one, and creating that of another, iii. 52, 122, 141, 145, 146.
- limitations do not run against the State, because it cannot be disseised iii. 141, 172.
- saving clauses in statute of limitations, iii. 147.
- do not extend to such as arise after the right accrued, iii. 147.
- statute of limitations, &c., of several States, iii. 148 – 161.

(See the STATES severally.)

POSSESSION AND FREEHOLD,

- convertible terms, at common law, iii. 306.

POSSESSION,

- how far identical with seisin, 47 ; ii. 498 ; iii. 117, 132.
- that of tenant not adverse to reversioner, 113.

(See ADVERSE POSSESSION.)

- how far essential to lessee's estate, 389.
- of tenant, is that of lessor, 389.
- of one joint owner that of all, 566.
- how far is presumptive notice of a deed, iii. 283 – 284.
- of mortgagor, that of mortgagee, ii. 158, 159.
- essential to maintaining trespass by lessee, 390.

POSSIBILITY,

- of issue extinct, effect upon estates tail, 98.
- a mere, not the subject of grant, iii. 89, 302.

POSTHUMOUS CHILDREN,

- inherit as if born in life of parent, iii. 16.
- how affected by will of parent, iii. 459.

POWERS,**I. ORIGIN AND NATURE,**

- created under statute of uses, 405 ; ii. 368, 590, 591.
- how far like springing and shifting uses, ii. 590, 591.
- when coupled with an interest, ii. 472, 484, 606, 616, 617.
- importance of distinction between, and an interest in the thing, ii. 605, 614, 615.
- a seisin must be created with it, ii. 610.
- how affected by will, or by deed, ii. 611.
- how far the doctrine of *cy pres* applies to, ii. 619, 620.
- of the priority of several in the same instrument, ii. 622.

POWERS — *Continued.*

execution and validity of, affected by rules as to perpetuities, ii. 620, 623–628.

(*See PERPETUITY.*)

how successive estates when appointed take effect, ii. 629.

to what purposes generally applied, ii. 630.

what rules as to, courts of law apply, iii. 603.

estates not rendered contingent by being liable to be revoked under, ii. 601.

may be applied to leases of lands, ii. 595.

II. DIFFERENT KINDS OF,

distinction between collateral and not, ii. 594–596, note.

if donee has no interest in the estate, it is collateral or naked, ii. 594.

distinction between appendant and in gross, ii. 594, 595.

between general and special, ii. 596.

under American law, ii. 602.

devise of lands to be sold, a power in New York, ii. 602.

“in trust,” what are, under law of New York, ii. 602, 603.

of appointment and revocation, ii. 592, 596.

how it operates upon the estate, ii. 592.

appointee, the one who takes under it, ii. 592.

may be annexed to an estate in fee, ii. 592, 593.

it may be assigned, ii. 617, 618.

what is an appointment, ii. 592.

the event on which the use springs, or shifts in favor of the appointee, ii. 592, 610–611.

how and when applied in cases of remainders, ii. 536.

appointee not the assignee of the appointor, ii. 611.

donee may not revoke except by express power to that effect, ii. 623.

what powers die with the one creating, and what survive, ii. 616, 617.

powers in wills held trusts in chancery, ii. 616.

to sell, when it authorizes creating a fee, and when not, ii. 603, 604.

does not generally include one to mortgage, ii. 609.

implies sale to be for money, ii. 610.

of powers to executors by will to sell, or, that they do sell, ii. 614.

what a naked power, and when a duty, ii. 615.

how far the case of executors, ii. 615.

an executor may be a trustee with a distinct power, ii. 615.

how far a power to appoint, and a fee, may coexist in the same person, ii. 605, 618.

what is a common-law power or authority, ii. 610.

III. HOW CREATED,

no particular form required, ii. 605.

may be by deed or will, ii. 604.

may be granted or reserved, and how, ii. 604.

one with a general power may authorize another to appoint, ii. 613.

unless it be a power with special confidence, ii. 613.

POWERS — *Continued.*

IV. HOW EXECUTED,

- who may execute, ii. 607.
- when administrator of mortgagee may execute power of sale, ii. 608.
- execution must follow precisely the form required in its creation, ii. 608, 609.
- equity corrects the execution of, but never executes, ii. 628.
- how far, in making the appointment, reference is to be made to the power, ii. 612.
- what may be done under a power to appoint to "children," "issue," &c. ii. 610.
- one with a general power may appoint to himself, ii. 613.
- husband and wife may appoint to each other, ii. 613.
- how donee of a power with an interest, executes it, ii. 617.
- how far one may appoint, who shall take under a devise, ii. 450, 455.
- whether granting an estate executes a power, or passes grantor's right, ii. 618.
- when so executed as to make appointee trustee for another, ii. 593, 594, 613.
- how far donee may suspend, destroy, or merge, or release the power, ii. 596, 599, 600.
- he cannot do so, in violation of duty, ii. 599.
- when donee compellable to execute it, ii. 618.
- when all donees, must join in its execution, ii. 614, 615.
- of the time when to be executed, ii. 622.
- effect of donee exceeding his power, iii. 619–623.
- effect of donee appointing a less estate than authorized, ii. 621.
- effect of annexing improper conditions to an estate appointed, ii. 621.
- how far equity aids defective execution of, ii. 628.
- power ceases, when its purposes are answered, ii. 606.
- appointee takes under the instrument creating the power, ii. 536, 593, 605, 608, 611, 626, 629.
- power of attorney executing deeds, &c. by, 395; iii. 249–252.
- whether wives can make, 233; iii. 232, 233.

POWER OF SALE UNDER A MORTGAGE, ii. 72–83.

- how far equity will restrain its exercise, ii. 73.
- in executing, mortgagee a trustee, ii. 73, 76.
- is irrevocable, does not die with mortgagor, ii. 73.
- how far it passes with the estate, ii. 73, 74, 79.
- who executes, if a part of the estate is assigned, ii. 74.
- implies a power to make deeds, ii. 76.
- how it is to be exercised, and for what purposes, ii. 76, 77.
- when executed, extinguishes mortgagor's estate, ii. 78.
- is itself extinguished by payment or tender of the debt, ii. 79.
- effect of payment of debt, on a *bona fide* purchaser, ii. 79.
- if mortgagee sells, and buys himself, sale may be avoided, ii. 77.

POWER OF SALE UNDER A MORTGAGE — Continued.

- when mortgagee may purchase, ii. 76.
- of powers of sale in trust mortgages, ii. 80 – 83.
- if it be to mortgagee and his administrators, his administrator may execute it where the land is, ii. 608.

PRÆCIPE,

- tenant to, who was, 52, 62.
- importance of having one, 51, 62.
- husband may be, as to wife's land, 312.

PRÆDIAL SERVITUDES, ii. 275.

(See EASEMENTS.)

PRAYING AID,

- by tenant of freeholder, 62, 589.
- now abolished, 109.

PRE-EMPTION,

- right of, may be secured to mortgagee, ii. 68.
- right of, in public lands, iii. 182, 183.

PREMISES,

- of a deed, what it embraces, iii. 318, 371.
- often used for the property conveyed, iii. 371.

PRESCRIPTION,**I PROPERLY APPLIES TO INCORPOREAL HEREDITAMENTS ONLY, iii. 51.**

- a mode of gaining an easement, ii. 227.
- is evidence of a grant or deed, 543, 549; ii. 277.
- what originally necessary to create it, ii. 293; iii. 51, 52.
- rules as to, at different periods, and in different States, ii. 53.
- modern prescription is a presumed grant, and of a lost deed, ii. 293; iii. 52, 54.
- what length of enjoyment presumes a grant, ii. 293, 294, 304; iii. 52.
- the requisite time answers to period of limitation, ii. 294, 304; iii. 52.
- how conclusive, the presumption raised by enjoyment, ii. 294, 295; iii. 52.
- modern prescription, only *prima facie* evidence of grant, ii. 294, 295; iii. 52.
- the extent and mode of enjoyment limits the right, ii. 296; iii. 54.
- user and enjoyment, to be the ground of, must be adverse, ii. 297 – 299.
- must be by one estate adverse to another, ii. 278.
- must be while owner of servient estate is under no disability, ii. 278.
- must be open and notorious, ii. 298.
- must be acquiesced in, not resisted nor forbidden, ii. 300.
- when prescription begins to run, ii. 304, 305.
- no time, short of prescription, raises any presumption of grant, ii. 304.
- the public cannot claim a right by, ii. 305.
- distinction between, and a custom, ii. 338.
- successors in privity of estate may gain, by united user, ii. 305.
- effect of death of owner of servient estate upon prescription, ii. 305.

PRESCRIPTION — Continued.

suspended, while his heir is a minor, ii. 305, 306, 337.
 not effected by a disability arising after ancestor's death, ii. 306.
 may be gained by a corporation in a *que estate*, ii. 339.

II. IN WHAT PRESCRIPTION MAY BE GAINED,

does not apply to underground waters, ii. 325.
 nor to flow of waters artificially created, ii. 328.
 may be for support of houses, by earth under and adjacent, ii. 330, 333.
 for support and repair of parts of houses, ii. 333.
 for carrying on nuisance trades, ii. 336.
 for fishing in another's waters, ii. 337.
 for maintaining fences, ii. 337.
 of *profit à prendre*, must be in a *que estate*, ii. 337.

PRESUMPTION OF GRANT, ii. 293.

(See **PRESCRIPTION.**)

PRESUMPTIO JURIS ET DE JURE,

when it applies, ii. 294; iii. 52.
 what user and enjoyment necessary to create it, iii. 52.

PRIMOGENITURE,

oldest son when sole heir, 41.
 when first adopted as to socage lands, 41, n.
 how far now a matter of custom, 97.

PRINCIPAL,

may avail of lease made by one, acting as his agent, 405.
 how far notice to his agent, is to himself, ii. 89.
 grant of, carries accessories, never the converse, iii. 338.

PRIORITY,

of use and application of water, effect of, ii. 321.

PRIVATE GRANT,

title acquired only by law of the place, iii. 216.
 when deed first required to convey, iii. 214.
 always necessary of incorporeal rights, iii. 214.
 in what States deeds not requisite, iii. 215, 244.
 of deeds, their qualities and execution, iii. 243–300.

(See **DEEDS.**)

what are escrows, iii. 267, 273.
 effect of cancelling one deed and making another, iii. 273, 275.
 making deeds good by relation, iii. 276–278.
 registration of deeds, iii. 281–291.
 disability to convey, from want of seisin, iii. 293–295.
 effect of deed, to compound a felony, or by duress, iii. 295.
 what deeds fraudulent and voluntary, iii. 295–299.
 title good in *bona fide* purchaser's hands, iii. 299.
 what property requires a deed to grant, iii. 300–303.
 deeds at common law, and in United States, iii. 304–314.

PRIVATE GRANT— *Continued.*

component parts of deeds, iii. 315–330.

construction of deeds, iii. 330–367.

PRIVITY,

what is meant by, 138, n.

1. *of action*, in case of waste, 137, 138.

2. *of contract*, between lessor and lessee, before entry, 412.

binds parties to lease, independent of possession, 412, 413.

does not exist between owner and tenant at sufferance, 585.

3. *of estate*, in what it consists, 138, n.; ii. 262, 370; iii. 110.

none between lessor and lessee, till entry by lessee, 412.

exists only, during the relation of landlord and tenant, 412.

by it, assignee of land liable for rent, ii. 260.

none between owner and tenant at sufferance, 535.

none between dowress and reversioner, or assignee, 138, 288.

how far between assignee of heir of reversioner, and assignee of dowress, 138.

essential to an action of waste, 137.

its effect upon the liability for covenants in a lease, 438.

by it, assignee of reversion recovers rent, 451.

essential to attaching burdens or benefits of covenants, to land, ii. 261–264; iii. 110.

how far it exists between lessee of mortgagor and mortgagee, ii. 131.

must exist between feoffee and *cestui que use*, to create a use, ii. 370.

after partition, none between one co-tenant and an alienee of another, 590.

by it, successors may unite their uses to gain title or prescription, ii. 305; iii. 125.

PROCREATION,

words of, necessary to create estates tail, 89.

PROFITS A PRENDRE,

what are, ii. 276.

must be limited in extent to be lawful, ii. 338.

to be prescribed for, in a *que estate*, ii. 339.

grant of profits of land, carries the land, iii. 333.

PROPERTY,

common-law division, into real and personal, 2, 4.

how regarded by the civil law, 4.

how divided by the Scotch law, 3.

regarded as an interest in land, distinct from title, 58; iii. 2, 3.

may exist under various forms and degrees, 58; iii. 3.

ownership of, expressed by *estate*, 59.

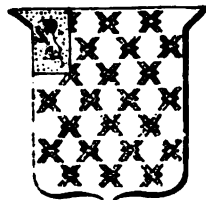
PROPRIETARIES,

might assess taxes in New England, iii. 209.

PROSPECT,

easement of, not gained by user, ii. 288.

may be by grant or covenant, ii. 288, 319.



LINCOLN'S INN
LIBRARY.

PROTECTOR,

power and duties of, in sales of estates tail, 97.

PROVISO,

may be a condition or a covenant, ii. 21.

PUBLIC,

may acquire rights of easement by custom, not by prescription, ii. 305.

PUBLIC DOMAIN,

of what it consists and how acquired, iii. 164 - 171.

how conveyed, iii. 173.

(*See* PUBLIC GRANT.)

PUBLIC GRANT,

what is meant by, iii. 163.

act of parliament and king's grant, iii. 163.

of the nature of the Indian titles, iii. 164, 168.

of the sovereignty and soil in the United States and the States, iii. 164, 165, 168 - 170.

public lands, how divided for sale, iii. 167.

mode of disposing of, by entry or sale, iii. 167.

what is a patent and its requisites, iii. 167.

States cannot control United States title to lands within their limits, iii. 169.

rights and liabilities of United States as proprietors within the States, iii. 170.

mines of gold in California pass with the freehold, iii. 170.

of grants of manors in New York, iii. 171.

rules for construing doubtful grants by the public, iii. 171, 172.

grant by government passes the seisin, iii. 173.

how far Congress can grant shores of navigable rivers, iii. 173.

of the forms by which public grants can be made, iii. 173.

of the force and effect of a patent, iii. 173 - 180.

effect of a register's certificate of purchase made, iii. 175 - 180.

effect of entry made and payment of purchase-money, on title, iii. 176 - 180.

how entry of land must be made, iii. 181.

land not to be sold in fractions of sections, iii. 181.

how far land-warrants, real estate, iii. 181.

rights of pre-emption to public lands, iii. 182.

grant of public lands in New England, how made, iii. 183 - 188.

grants by legislature, towns, and proprietaries, how made, iii. 184 - 189.

PUNCTUATION,

not regarded in construing deeds, 343.

PURCHASE,

as a mode of title contrasted with descent, 89; iii. 4.

what are words of, and what of limitation, ii. 561; iii. 373.

PURCHASERS,

successive, of mortgaged premises, how to contribute, ii. 186 - 192.

PURCHASERS — Continued.

- of an equity of redemption, have no claim on the personal estate of the mortgagor, ii. 186.
- how far a mortgagee is regarded one, ii. 89, 90.
- under a power of sale mortgage, how far affected by payment of the debt, ii. 79.
- of a trustee, how far affected by the violation of the trust, ii. 76.
- in possession of land, when not liable for rent, 512.
- would be liable, if holding after contract at an end, 512.
- how liable, if he refuse to execute the agreement on his part, 513.
- of land, when bound to see to application of purchase-money, ii. 490.

Q.**QUALIFIED FEE,**

- in what it consists, 78.

QUANTITY,

- of land in a deed, how far descriptive only, iii. 347, 418.
- when held to be a covenant, iii. 418.

QUARANTINE,

- rights of, in favor of widows, 171, 172, 175, 255.
- statute of the several States as to, 255, 256.

QUARE IMPEDIT,

- a form of real action in England, 263.

QUARRIES,

- of stone, of separate property in, 12.

QUE ESTATE,

- corporation must claim prescription by, ii. 339.
- necessary, in order to claim *profits à prendre*, ii. 339.

QUIA EMPTORES,

- statute of, abolishes tenure between grantor and grantee, 43, 52, 289 ii. 251.
- not adopted in Pennsylvania, 195 ; ii. 252.
- gave the first right of free alienation, 43, 68 ; iii. 214.
- prevented creating new manors, 42.
- adopted in New York, iii. 171.

QUIET ENJOYMENT,

- what is an implied covenant for, 427, 430.

QUITCLAIM DEED,

- a good form of conveyance, iii. 309, 311–314, 330.

QUIT-RENT,

- what it was, ii. 252, n.

QUITTING,

- premises, lessor has not the right of, though destroyed, 467.
- notice as to, to determine estates at will, 516, 517.
- in cases of tenancies from year to year, 524–528.

R.

RACEWAY,

of mill, may be cleared by owner, ii. 324.

RAILROAD,

capital stock in, real estate in Kentucky, 194.

mortgage of, what it carries, ii. 149.

franchise of, ii. 268.

RATIFICATION,

of voidable leases, effect of, 402.

of deed or lease of an infant, 403.

REAL ACTION,

damages not recoverable in, at common law, 260, 264.

what forms of, are retained, 262, 263.

REAL PROPERTY,

what is included in, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 20, 194.

REAL ESTATE,

used as synonymous with lands and tenements, 59.

REBUTTER,

by force of warranty, when it applies, iii. 88, 102, 408.

doctrine applied as a bar to dower, 238.

RECEIVER,

to mortgage-estates, when appointed, ii. 129, 133.

appointed in one State, cannot foreclose a mortgage in another, ii. 233.

RECITALS,

in leases, when a covenant, 435.

in deeds, how far they estop, iii. 93, 94.

how far reference had to, in construing deeds, iii. 368.

how far those in other deeds referred to, conclude parties, iii. 94.

in tax deed, are not evidence of facts stated, iii. 203.

RECOGNISANCE,

under English law for extent on debtor's land, ii. 26.

RECORD,

of mortgages, how far notice, ii. 125, 137, 195, 196.

of a second, no notice to holder of a prior mortgage, ii. 125, 195, 196.

when they take effect in the order of being made, ii. 136.

of mortgage, not properly executed, no notice, ii. 139.

effect of, as notice, if mistake in record, ii. 137, 139, 140.

within what time to be made, ii. 137, 138.

of assignment of a mortgage, how far notice to mortgagor, ii. 140.

of assignment of a mortgage, notice to after-assignees, ii. 140.

of second mortgage, how far notice to prior one, ii. 147, 148, 195, 196.

how far notice to prior one for future advances, ii. 148.

(See MORTGAGES, III. AND IV.)

how far required of leases, 410.

of a deed, equivalent to livery of seisin, ii. 411.

(See REGISTRATION.)

RECOUPMENT,

for damages for breach of covenant, when allowed, 459.

RECOVERIES,

as a mode of conveying lands, 84, 85.

once in use in the United States, 230, n.

used to bar entails, 85, 86.

form of proceedings in, 85, 86.

abolished now, 84, 98.

had their origin in Taltarum's case, 85.

REDEMPTION,

right in equity of, ii. 41.

purchaser of, cannot set up usury against the mortgage, ii. 165.

purchaser of, at sheriff's sale, cannot deny the validity of the mortgage, ii. 165.

purchaser of, cannot object to the mortgage as fraudulent, ii. 165.

(See MORTGAGE, X.)

RE-ENTRY,

for forfeiture, by lessee upon tenant, 493, 494, n.

right of, for non-payment of rent, ii. 257.

how it may be enforced for fee-farm rent, ii. 258.

REFORM,

power of court to, in cases of mistakes in deed, iii. 332.

REGISTRATION OF DEEDS,

how far adopted in England, iii. 281.

distinct from enrolment of, iii. 280.

regulated by State laws, and in force in all, iii. 281.

when made, notice to all the world, iii. 285.

takes effect from time of deposit in the office, iii. 285.

of what it is a notice, iii. 285, 292.

what requisite to its being valid, iii. 286.

extent of notice limited to terms of record, iii. 286.

within what time to be made, iii. 287, 288.

when recorded, copies of deeds used in proof, iii. 289.

when proof of the execution of deeds, iii. 288.

(See RECORD.)

RELATION,

when conveyances made good by, iii. 276 - 278.

RELEASE,

by disseisee or joint tenant, carries a fee without "heirs," 73.

by reversioner to tenant, must have words of inheritance, 73.

of damages by mortgagor, does not bar mortgagee, ii. 156.

of dower by wife, how made, 230.

requisites of deeds, to have that effect, 231 - 234.

absolves the tenant from his covenants, 466.

by mortgagee, of one of several mortgaged parcels, effect of, ii. 125, 195.

RELEASE — *Continued.*

- of part of land, how far it affects rent charged upon the estate, ii. 265.
- of part of the rent on an estate good, ii. 266.
- as a conveyance, a primary one in this country, and secondary in England, iii. 102.
- with warranty, works an estoppel, iii. 89, 102.
- deed of, may avail as a grant, &c. iii. 331.

RELEASE AND QUITCLAIM,

- a mode of valid conveyance of lands, iii. 309, 311 – 314, 330.

RELIEFS,

- as feudal fruits, what, 35.

REMAINDER,**I. HOW CREATED AND DEFINED, 61 ; ii. 22, 23, 500, 520.**

- what amounts to seisin of, 50, 61.
 - always created by purchase, never by descent, ii. 500, 501.
 - ownership of, distinct from that of particular estate, ii. 501.
 - what is a prior, or particular estate, ii. 501, 504.
 - remainder must have one to sustain it, ii. 500.
 - there can be none, where there is no reversion, ii. 501.
 - distinction between, and executory devise, ii. 502, 541.
 - doctrine of, no violation of dogma, as to seisin, ii. 502.
 - must take effect immediately, on ceasing of prior estate, ii. 503, 540, 544, 545.
 - remainder and particular estate, form one equal to both, ii. 503.
 - can be no remainder after a fee, 76 ; ii. 23, 503, 536.
 - distinction between, and conditional limitation, iii. 22, 23, 504, 505, 541.
 - why estates tail admit of a remainder, ii. 506.
 - no precise form of words necessary to create, ii. 506.
 - limitation never construed an executory devise, that can be a remainder, ii. 505.
 - prior estate and remainder, must pass from grantor by the same act, iii. 512, 545.
 - must be continuous parts of the same inheritance, ii. 512, 513.
 - remainder fails, if prior estate defeated *ab initio*, ii. 512, 545.
 - estate at will, not a sufficient prior estate, 506 ; ii. 513.
 - remainder must wait, till the prior estate determines of itself, ii. 513, 540.
 - several remainders must come in, in order, ii. 514.
 - no tenure between remainder and particular estate, ii. 514.
 - possession of particular tenant, not adverse to remainder-man, ii. 514.
 - remainders not within the rule of perpetuities, ii. 517.
 - can only be created, or transferred by deed, iii. 300.
- II. VESTED OR CONTINGENT.**
- distinction between, ii. 502, 506.

REMAINDER—Continued.

when remainder vested, ii. 507.
 what is meant by *capacity* to take, ii. 507.
 distinction between vested in possession, and in interest, ii. 507.
 the law inclined to vested interests, ii. 510.
 vested remainders alienable, like estates in possession, ii. 512.
 how vested remainders may be defeated, *Boraston's case*, ii. 537.
 devise to a class may be vested, though not all *in esse*, ii. 511, 546.
 when remainder to heirs of one living, may be vested, ii. 526.
 uncertainty of future enjoyment, no test of contingency, ii. 506, 526, 537.
 prior estate to a contingent remainder, must be a freehold, ii. 282, 502, 543.
 how far modified by statute, ii. 543, 550.
 contingent, become vested when contingency happens, ii. 515.
 may become vested, though never enjoyed, ii. 527.
 what renders remainders contingent in New Hampshire, ii. 508, n.
 when a remainder, after a contingent one, may be vested, ii. 527, 528.
 limitation to A for life, remainder to B during A's life, a vested one, ii. 527.

III. CROSS REMAINDERS, ii. 516 – 518.

how they may be limited, ii. 517.
 whole estate in the end goes in entirety, ii. 517.

IV. CONTINGENT REMAINDERS.

their nature and history, 94; ii. 519, 520.
 instances of, what are, 94; ii. 520, 521.
 how far alienable, ii. 509, 522, 548, 549.

1. four classes of, ii. 522.

what cases are embraced in these classes, ii. 522 – 524.
 of a term of years, supported by a tenure, ii. 525, 543, 544.
 prior estate expiring at death, after a term for years, when it supports one, ii. 524, 525, 543.
 how far rule in *Shelley's case* forms exception to law of, ii. 525, 526.
 when remainder to heirs of one living, is vested, ii. 526.
 how far remainders limited, after contingent ones, may be vested, ii. 527, 528.

cases of *Napper v. Saunders*, and *Lethieullier v. Tracy*, ii. 528, 529.

2. how far subsequent limitations affected by contingency of prior ones, ii. 529, 530, 534.

Mr. Fearne's three classes of such cases, ii. 531 – 534.
 limitation of remainders in fee with a double aspect, ii. 534.
 case of *Luddington v. Kime*, ii. 534, 535.
 can be no vested remainder, after a contingent one in fee, ii. 535.
 of limiting one fee after another as a remainder, in case of trusts, ii. 536.

3. on what event such remainder may be limited, ii. 538.

REMAINDER — Continued.

- must be on a possibility not too remote, ii. 538.
- what is a possibility upon a possibility, ii. 539.
- too remote, if to a child of one unborn, ii. ii. 539.
- when to children of one unborn, held to be an estate tail, ii. 539.
- event must not abridge the particular estate, ii. 540.
- remainder must not be in the nature of a condition at law, ii. 540.
- when a limitation to two, remainder over, on death of one, bad, ii. 540.
- case of estate to A for life, remainder to B if A marries, ii. 541.
- remainder good, though the event may destroy prior estate by merging it, iii. 541, 542.
- legal estate in trustee, supports contingent in *cestui que trust*, ii. 545.
- remainder may fail as to some, and vest as to others, ii. 546.
- when a remainder to a class will open to let in others, ii. 546.
- 4. how contingent remainders defeated, ii. 432, 546 – 549.
- how far, by defeating particular estate, 183, n.; ii. 503, 512, 515, 544, 545, 547, 649.
- not by deed, to uses of particular estate, ii. 547.
- how far merging of reversion and particular estate destroys remainder, 182, 183; ii. 547.
- how guarded by trustees to preserve, ii. 432, 478, 548.
- cestui que trust* cannot defeat a contingent remainder in trust, ii. 463, 546.

(See TRUSTS.)

- in whom is the inheritance, while the remainder is contingent, ii. 548.
- how contingent remainders are distinguished from executory devises, ii. 648, 649.

V. AMERICAN STATUTES AS TO REMAINDERS, ii. 549 – 553.

- as to creating freeholds *in futuro*, ii. 550.
- limiting remainders, to abridge prior estate, ii. 551.
- as to remoteness of contingency, ii. 551.
- as to defeating particular estates, 183 n.; ii. 551.
- as to descent and alienation of remainders, ii. 552.

RENTS,**I. CHARGE AND SECK, WHAT THEY ARE, ii. 251.**

- fee-farm include both, ii. 251.
- how created, ii. 251 – 253.
- must be by some one who is seised of land, ii. 255.
- are incorporeal hereditaments, ii. 250.
- defined, and their origin, ii. 250, 254.
- service*, what they are, ii. 250.
- how affected by statute of *quia emptores*, ii. 250, 251.
- how far they exist in this country, ii. 252, 255.
- charge and seck have the same right of distress, ii. 252.
- how far entire or divisible, ii. 265 – 267.
- estates in, may be predicated of, ii. 253.
- are subjects of grant, ii. 254.

RENTS — Continued.

to create estates in, requires word of limitation and inheritance, ii. 253.
 descend to heirs, like lands, ii. 254.
 may be granted, but not reserved to a stranger, ii. 253.
 may be granted in remainder, ii. 253.
 cannot be granted to commence in *futuro*, ii. 254.
 may be conveyed to uses, ii. 254.
 are subject to dower and curtesy, 195 ; ii. 254.
 distinction between, and mortgages, ii. 254.
 for what purposes applied, ii. 255, n.
 can only be created or transferred by deed, ii. 254 ; iii. 300.
 not subject to disseisin, ii. 254.
 what is equivalent to seisin of, ii. 254.
 not to be created out of incorporeal hereditaments, ii. 255.
 estate in, limited by that of the land itself, ii. 255.
 not the subject of escheat, ii. 266.
 will merge in the fee of the land, ii. 267.

II. HOW ENFORCED OR EXTINGUISHED.

how far rents run, as a burden with land, ii. 256, 261 – 264.
 how far owner of land, out of which rent is granted, is liable, ii. 261.
 in what States, may be distrained for, ii. 256, 257.
 may be recovered by action at law, ii. 257.
 in what cases recoverable *pro rata*, ii. 257.
 of remedy for, by re-entry and holding the land, ii. 257, 258.
 great strictness necessary in making demand, ii. 258.
 how far releasing part of the land affects the rent on the other, ii. 252,
 253, 265.
 effect of holder of, purchasing part of the land, ii. 265.
 effect of descent of part of the land, to the holder of, ii. 265.
 effect on rent, of a division of land by law, ii. 266.
 extinguished, by payment of the money, ii. 255.
 merges in ownership of the land, unless mortgage intervenes, ii. 267.
 holder of, may release part of the rent, ii. 266, n.
 in terms for years, 385.

(See LEASES.)

RENTS AND PROFITS,

grant or devise of, carries the land, 753 ; iii. 333, 450.

REPARATIONE FACIENDA,

writ of, 571.
 superseded as to mills, in Massachusetts, 572.

REPAIRS,

of leased property, who to make, 429.
 effect on payment of rent, if not made, 429.
 failure to make, not an eviction, 429.
 lessee's remedy, if lessor fails to make, 429.
 when one co-tenant can compel another to join in making, 571.

REPAIRS — Continued.

- law as to joint owners of mills, in Massachusetts, 572.
- of damage by fire, when tenant to make, 472.
- lessor only bound by covenant to make, 469.
- how far lessee bound to repair leased premises, 135.
- how far one part of a house responsible for, to another, ii. 335, 336

REPURCHASE,

- right of distinct from a mortgage, ii. 62.
- can only be availed of, by a strict performance, ii. 62.

REPUTATION,

- how far competent to fix boundaries of land, iii. 364 — 367.

RESERVATION,

- distinction between, and exception, iii. 369, 375, 376.
- its use in deeds, iii. 375 — 378.
- often used, intending exception, iii. 375, 376.
- must be to the grantor, and not a stranger, iii. 377.
- must be out of the estate granted, iii. 378.

RESULTING USE,

- when equity raises one, ii. 363, 397 — 400.
- (See USES.)
- trusts, when they arise, ii. 437 — 439. (See TRUSTS.)

RETURN,

- of sales, &c. made by officers, how far conclusive, iii. 211.

REVERSION,

- what it is, 61; ii. 500, 685.
- not affected by acts of, or to the previous tenant, 113; ii. 303, 692; iii. 132.
- one, if tenant for life lets his estate to the reversioner, for his own life, 105.
- when it passes by grant, 51; ii. 686.
- when there may be, after a base fee, 78; ii. 687.
- what is a possibility of reverter, and not a reversion, 79.
- fealty due to, from the tenant, ii. 251, 692.
- when it merges a prior estate, 105, 480; ii. 691.
- when the holder of, entitled to rent, 431, 432, 451; ii. 690.
- had right to distrain for rent service, ii. 251.
- when the assignment of, carries covenants, 438, 434; ii. 691.
- apportionment of rent among holders, 452.
- rent accrues to, by reason of privity of estate, 452; ii. 691.
- had no right to distrain for rent charge, except by agreement, ii. 252.
- a smaller term in, may merge a larger prior one, 480, 481.
- may be separated from the rent of the term, 458; ii. 692.
- when transfer of, does not affect tenant's liability, 455.
- a distinct right, from that of availing of a condition, ii. 11, 12.
- what holder of, is to contribute toward charges on lands, ii. 197, 198
- holder may have waste, 136.
- rights to rent, which follow in executing powers, ii. 600.

REVERSION — Continued.

- when he has the seisin, or otherwise, 49, 50; ii. 688.
- limitation does not run against, till death of tenant for life, iii. 133
- can only be conveyed by deed, iii. 301.
- attornment formerly necessary to convey it, ii. 686.
- may not be conveyed to commence in *futuro*, ii. 686.
- may be one, after any number of previous estates, ii. 686
- may be in estates for years, or in freehold, ii. 687.
- exists in donor of an estate tail, ii. 686, 687.
- how far descent may be traced through, ii. 688, 689; iii. 13.
- after estate for years, subject to dower and curtesy, ii. 689.
- what rights of ownership incident to, ii. 689.
- owner of, has a right to trees tortiously cut, ii. 690.
- right of, in respect to land held by corporation, extinct, ii. 692.
- how far limitation to grantor's heirs, is one, ii. 692.

REVOCATION,

- of that granted by deed, requires a deed, iii. 302.

RHODE ISLAND,

- Aliens*, how hold real estates, 64.
- Attachment*, on mesne process, a lien, ii. 29.
- Advancement*, law as to, iii. 41.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
- Curtesy*, allowed in, 150.
- Co-tenants*, liable to each other in damages, 558.
- Common*, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.
- Descent*, general laws of, iii. 35.
 - how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689; iii. 14.
- Deeds*, forms of, in use, ii. 420; iii. 312.
 - equivalent to livery of seisin, iii. 329.
 - deposit of, how far it creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Dower*, of all seised during coverture, 251.
 - damages for detaining same, 266.
- Divorce*, effect of, on wife's right to land, 292, 294.
- Estates, tail*, how barred, 100.
 - per autre vie*, devisable, 109.
- Husband and wife*, tenants in common, 581.
- Joint estates*, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far in use, 556.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
 - what must be by deed, 394.
 - what must be recorded, 410.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 158.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 245.
- Mortgagees*, may have replevin for timber, ii. 129.
- Mortgagor*, within what time he may redeem, ii. 171.

RHODE ISLAND — Continued.

- Married women*, rights and powers of, 323.
may make wills, iii. 434.
- Partition*, how made of land, 594.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, in wills, ii. 562.
- Recording deeds*, what is, iii. 285.
- Waste*, form of action for, 143, 145.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.
- Wills*, what witnesses required to, iii. 431.
married women may make, iii. 434.

RIGHT,

- in equity, to redeem, ii. 41.

(See MORTGAGE, X.)

RIPARIAN PROPRIETORS,

- entitled to accretion and alluvion, iii. 55.
- how lands of, divided by a stream, iii. 55, 56, 353 — 357.
- rights of, to use of water, ii. 320, 321.
- rights of, to shore, with crooked lines, how fixed, iii. 367, n.

RIVERS,

- not navigable, what are, iii. 353, 356, 357.
- the *filum aquæ* the boundary of land, iii. 354, 355.
- applies to the large rivers of America, iii. 355 — 357.
- rights of parties to islands formed in, iii. 355.
- public may use such rivers as highways, iii. 356, 357.

ROLLING STOCK,

- of railroads, when real estate, 11; ii. 149.

ROMAN LAW,

- as to heirs, how evaded, iii. 355.

RUNNING,

- with land, of covenants, ii. 261 — 264.

RULE IN SHELLEY'S CASE, ii. 553 — 563.

- in what States in force, and in what abolished, ii. 563.
- the rule, and its meaning, 93; ii. 554, 555.
- held a contingent remainder in some States, ii. 554.
- how far holder of the freeholder may alien the estate, ii. 557, 558.
- how far the rule extends, ii. 555.
- both the estates must be legal, or both equitable, ii. 557.
- executory trusts not within the rule, ii. 557.
- rule requires the first estate to be a freehold, 558.
- how far it is an exception to contingent remainders, ii. 525, 526.
- takes effect, though first estate expressly limited for life, ii. 558, 559.
- in what form of limitation the rule does not apply, ii. 559.
- when limitation to "son," or "heir," may or may not be within it, ii. 559 — 561.
- when "child," or "children," words of purchase, and when of limitation, ii. 560.

RULE IN SHELLEY'S CASE — *Continued.*

- "heirs," when a word of purchase, ii. 560, 561
- "issue," means descendants, ii. 561.
- when words of purchase, and when of limitation, ii. 561.

S.**SALES,**

- of land, by legislative act, iii. 192 – 199.
- by decretal orders of court, iii. 200.
- under mechanic's lien, iii. 201.

SALT WELLS,

- when digging for, is waste, 130.
- Petroleum found in, to whom it belongs, 131 n.

SATISFIED TERMS,

- outstanding, once in use, 408 – 410.
- now abolished, 409.

SAXON LAWS,

- in use in England, 27, 28.
- prevailed in Kent, 28.

SCINTILLA JURIS,

- what it is, and how applied, ii. 389, 567.

SEA,

- as a boundary of land, what is the line of, iii. 359.

SEALING,

- when brought into use in deeds, in England, iii. 243.
- in what States not required now, iii. 244.
- indispensable to deeds in all other States, iii. 244.
- what constitutes it, and where scrolls in use, iii. 247.
- not required by the civil law, iii. 244 n.

SCROLL,

- used as a seal in deeds in what States, iii. 247.

SECK, RENT,

- what, ii. 252.

(See RENT.)

SEISINA FACIT STIPITEM NON JUS,

- now abolished, iii. 14

SEISIN,

- in what it consists, 29, 45.
- how it was conferred, 44 ; iii. 121.
- by deed, executed and recorded, iii. 121.
- there can be but one, in a feudal sense, 46 ; ii. 497, 498 ; iii. 115.
- it is in fact, or in law, 45, 47 ; iii. 118.
- essential to make a good deed, 51 ; iii. 293.
- how far identical with possession, 47 ; ii. 498 ; iii. 117, 132.
- gained, when by entry and when by statute of uses, 48.

SEISIN — *Continued.*

- of remainders and reversions, what is, 49, 51, 61 ; iii. 115.
- must be actual in the freeholder, 51 ; ii. 498 ; iii. 115.
- kept by tenant of less estate, for the freeholder, ii. 498.
- could never be in abeyance, 51.
- what is necessary to curtesy, 151.
- what to dower, 201 – 203, 209.
- effect on dower, of defeating husband's seisin, 239, 240.
- of covenants of, in deeds, iii. 382 – 391.
- what regarded as an instantaneous one, 204 – 208.
- whether of wife's land, is joint in husband and wife, 312.
- of mortgagee, not defeated by payment of debt, ii. 122, 123.
- when deed of release from mortgagee requisite, ii. 123.
- seisin of one joint tenant seisin of all, 556.
- seisin in equity, 209.
- of rent, what it is, ii. 254.
- when lost, regained by entry, iii. 119.
- once had, is presumed to continue, iii. 130.
- government grant carries a seisin, iii. 173.

SERVICES, FEUDAL,

- in what they consisted, 30, 35.
- distinction between base and free, 37.
- military, regarded the most honorable, 37.

SERVITUDES, ii. 275.

(See EASEMENTS.)

SERVIENT ESTATE,

- what is, ii. 275.

SETTLEMENT,

- mortgagor has in a town as a freeholder, ii. 157.

(See MARRIAGE.)

SEVERALTY,

- estates in, what are, 553.

SEVERANCE,

- of heritage, creates easements, ii. 288 – 292.

SHARES,

- letting lands upon, 496 – 501.

SHELLEY'S CASE,

- rule in, when applied, 93 ; ii. 455, 525, 537, 561.
- when applied to trusts, ii. 455, 460, 537.
- in what States prevails, ii. 561.

(See RULE IN SHELLEY'S CASE.)

SHORE,

- what is meant by, iii. 58, 359.
- belongs to the State, in Alabama, iii. 170.
- of rules, as to bounding lands by, iii. 359, 360, 367 n.
- what state of tide fixes the shore line, iii. 58, 359.
- extent of, by colonial law of Massachusetts, iii. 360

SIGNING,

- not essential to a deed, at common law, iii. 217, 243.
- generally required now, iii. 217, 244.
- how far necessary to a corporate deed, iii. 246.

SLAVES,

- when regarded like real property, 11.

SOCAGE TENURE,

- its meaning and character, 37.
- is the present English tenure, 39.
- tenant may freely alienate his lands, 39, 40.
- escheat, an incident to, 39.
- was the tenure of the Colonies, 36, 37.
- of villein socage, &c. 88.

SOLE AND SEPARATE,

- effect of, in creating estates in married women, 314.

SON AND CHILD,

- when a term of limitation, ii. 560.

SOUTH CAROLINA,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64.
- Bargain and sale*, as a conveyance, iii. 312.
- Curtesy*, is an estate in fee, 150.
- Conveyance*, of curtesy, no forfeiture, 168.
- Charitable uses*, in force, iii. 439.
- Dower*, of all seised during coverture, 251.
 - action for, limited to twenty years, 249.
 - no damages recovered in, 265.
- Deposit* of title deeds, creates a lien, ii. 86.
- Distress*, lies for rent, ii. 256.
- Deeds*, what forms of in use, ii. 420.
 - require two witnesses, iii. 248.
 - time given for recording, iii. 288.
 - what constitutes recording of, iii. 285.
- Descent*, general laws of, iii. 35.
 - seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689 ; iii. 14.
- Damages*, for breach of warranty, iii. 423.
- Elopement*, effect of on wife's rights, 294.
- Estates tail*, never adopted here, 100.
 - in free and common socage, 53.
- Foreclosure*, suing for and for debt, ii. 228.
 - who parties to suit for, ii. 231.
- Judgment*, a lien on land, ii. 29.
- Leases*, how signed by agents, 395.
- what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Life*, chances of, how estimated, 283.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 159.

SOUTH CAROLINA — *Continued.*

- Lease and release*, once in use, iii. 312.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - carry no estate, ii. 102.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 228, 242.
 - who parties to foreclosure, ii. 231.
 - widow may call on personal to pay, 207.
- Prescription*, none of light and air, ii. 318.
- Partition*, of common lands, 600.
- Scroll*, answers to seal, iii. 247.
- Uses*, applied in conveyance of estates, ii. 414.
- Will*, estates at, how determined, 528.
- Witnesses*, how many required for a will, iii. 431.
- Wills*, marriage and birth of child revoke, iii. 458.
- Widows*, call on personal to pay mortgages, 207.

SOVEREIGNTY,

- and soil, in America, once in the crown, iii. 164.
- passed to the government of the United States, iii. 165.
- how far States are successors to, of the crown, and the United States, iii. 169 – 171.
- never in abeyance, iii. 169.
- change of, does not affect private rights, iii. 171.
- eminent domain incident to, 54 ; iii. 50.
- right of taxation incident to, iii. 202.

SPRINGS OF WATER,

- rights as to, ii. 323.

STATE,

- rights and power of, as to lands, iii. 169, 170.
- cannot be disseised of lands, nor barred by limitation, iii. 172, 187
- cannot bring trespass or ejectment, to try title, iii. 172, 187.
- grant by, carries livery of seisin, iii. 173.

STATUE,

- when held to be part of the realty, 11.

STATUTE,

- de donis*, terms of, 32.
- created estates tail, 83.
- of frauds*, 531 ; iii. 214.
- (See FRAUDS.)
- of Gloucester*, damages in waste, 126.
- of Marlbridge*, against waste, 126.
- merchant and staple*, their application, ii. 26.
- of Merton*, giving widow crops, 120.
- barring dower, if wife elopes, &c. 227.
- how far applies in United States, 228.
- giving widow damages in dower, 264.
- quia emptores*, its purposes and effect, 42, 43, 52, 289 ; iii. 214.

STATUTES, ENGLISH,

- 52 & 58 Wm. I., 32, 33.
 20 Hen. III. ch. 2 (Merton), 120.
 52 " ch. 24 (Marlbridge), 126, 137, 141.
 6 Edw. I. ch. 5 (Gloucester), 126, 137, 141, 142, 229.
 " " ch. 7, 229.
 7 " (*de religiosis*), ii. 355.
 11 " stat. merchant, ii. 26.
 13 " ch. 1 (*De donis*), 82.
 " " ch. 18 (*eligit*), 40; ii. 25, 26.
 " " ch. 22, 557, 569.
 " " ch. 32, 85.
 " " ch. 34, 227.
 18 " ch. 1 (*quia emptores*), 68.
 27 Edw. III. ii. 26.
 30 " ii. 359.
 50 " ii. 371.
 2 Rich. II. ch. 33, ii. 371.
 5 " ch. 7, 537.
 7 " ch. 12, ii. 359.
 15 " ch. 5, ii. 357, 371.
 1 Rich. III. ch. 1, ii. 371.
 4 Hen. VII. 85.
 21 Hen. VIII. ch. 4, ii. 633.
 23 " ch. 6, ii. 26.
 27 " ch. 10 (*uses*), 69, 189, 298; ii. 371, 373, 424, 633.
 " " ch. 16 (*enrolments*), ii. 390; iii. 214, 280.
 31 " ch. 1, 560, 581, 583, 589.
 32 " ch. 1 (*wills*), 44, 56, 70; ii. 365, 375, 633; iii. 426.
 " " ch. 28, 85, 579.
 " " ch. 32, 560, 581, 583.
 " " ch. 34 (*conditions*), 417, 432, 434, 442; ii. 12, 260, 690.
 33 " ch. 20, ii. 369.
 34-35 " ch. 5 (*wills*), 70; iii. 426, 427.
 13 Eliz. ch. 5; 27 Eliz. ch. 4, iii. 295.
 39, 40 & 43 Eliz. ch. 4, iii. 436, 437.
 21 James II. ch. 16, ii. 457; iii. 121, 146.
 12 Ch. II. ch. 24, 35.
 29 " ch. 3 (*frauds*), 531; ii. 465; iii. 214, 300, 427.
 4 Anne, ch. 16, 451, 570; ii. 686.
 6 " ch. 31 (*accidental fires*), 136, 472.
 4 Geo. II. ch. 28, 536; ii. 256.
 11 Geo. II. ch. 19, 114, 536; ii. 266.
 14 Geo. III. ch. 78, 472.
 3 & 4 Wm. IV. ch. 27, 110, 141, 250, 581; ii. 457; iii. 146.
 " " ch. 71, ii. 295; iii. 51.

STATUTES, ENGLISH — *Continued.*

- 3 & 4 Wm. IV. ch. 74, 97, 230.
- " " ch. 105, 172, 190, 250, 296; ii. 463.
- " " ch. 106, ii. 526, 692; iii. 8, 460.
- 4 & 5 " ch. 22, 114; ii. 266.
- 5 & 6 " ch. 54, 200.
- 1 & 2 Vict. ch. 74, 529.
- " " ch. 110, ii. 26.
- 2 & 3 " ch. 11, ii. 26.
- 7 & 8 " ch. 66, 226.
- 8 & 9 " ch. 56, 147.
- " " ch. 106, 22, 46, 183, 229, 475; ii. 394, 650; iii. 800, 411.
- " " ch. 112, ii. 480.

STATUTES, AMERICAN,

- accumulation by devises, ii. 683.
- alienage, 63, 64.
- descents, iii. 21 - 44.
- divorce, 292 - 295.
- dower, 251, 252.
- estates tail, 99, 100.
- per autre vie*, 108, 109.
- estates in remainder, ii. 549, 553.
- executions, levy of, ii. 27 - 34, 490.
- fees, without the word "heirs," 41.
- foreclosure of mortgages, ii. 238 - 247.
- joint estates, partition, &c. 591 - 602.
- limitation, title by, iii. 148 - 161.
- limitation upon failure of issue, &c. ii. 682.
- New York, as to trusts, ii. 491, 602.
- partition, 591, 602.
- perpetuities, ii. 680 - 682.
- Shelley's case, ii. 563.
- widow's quarantine, 255.
- waste, 142 - 145.

(*See the STATES severally.*)

STIRPES OR STIPES.

- what in fixing descent, iii. 9, 10.

STOCK,

- in capital of corporations, when real estate, 13.

STREET,

- bounding land by, includes the soil to its centre, iii. 360 - 363.
- how far referring to one, is a covenant as to, iii. 412.
- how far referring to one, estops grantor to deny it exists, iii. 412.

STREAMS,

- what are navigable, iii. 358.
- rules as to being boundaries of land, iii. 353, 354 n.

STREAMS — Continued.

- its meanderings to be reduced to a straight line, iii. 354.
- what is the *flum aquæ*, iii. 353.
- effect as to, of islands forming in the same, iii. 355.
- rule as to, extends to the great rivers, where tide does not flow, iii. 355 – 357.
- such rivers are public highways, iii. 355, 356.
- may not be diverted or obstructed, ii. 329.
- applies as well to underground as surface streams, ii. 325, 327.
- rules as to, if from artificial sources, ii. 328.

STRICT SETTLEMENT,

- what it is, ii. 652.

SUBINFEUDATION,

- what it was, and why applied, 33, 43.
- put an end to, by statute *quia emptores*, 43.
- how far it exists between heir and dowress, 290.

SUB-LETTING,

- as distinguished from assignment, 434, 444 – 449.

SUBPŒNA,

- in chancery, writ of, origin and use of, ii. 359, 369, 424.

SUBSTITUTION AND SUBROGATION,

- in what cases applied, ii. 166, 199 – 201.
- when holder of an equity pays mortgage, ii. 166.
- of mortgagor, to place of mortgagee, ii. 200.
- when right of, lost for want of notice, ii. 201.
- of insurer, to place of mortgagee insured, ii. 213, 214, n.
- of surety, to place of mortgagee, ii. 198.
- of creditor, to place of surety, ii. 199.
- of one surety, to place of another, ii. 201.
- not allowed, except where parties are in *æquali jure*, ii. 166.

SUB-TENANCY, 434, 444 – 449.

(See UNDERLETTING.)

SUBTERRANEAN, iii. 325 – 327.

(See UNDERGROUND, &c.)

SUCCESSORS,

- in privity, may acquire title by disseisin and adverse enjoyment, ii. 305; iii. 130 – 132.
- wife of disseisor, not in privity with him, iii. 131.
- how far States were, to the crown and United States, iii. 169 – 171, 185.

SUFFERANCE,

- tenant by, who is such, 533, 534.
- always results from contract, 535.
- cannot question lessor's title, 535.
- how far law of landlord and tenant applies to, 535.
- no privity of contract or estate with lessor, 535.
- not entitled to notice to quit, 535, 541.

SUFFERANCE — *Continued.*

- not liable to trespass for holding possession, 535.
- how far liable for rent, 536.
- determined by lessor's entry, 535, 436.
- cannot assign his tenancy, 537.
- may be expelled by force, 537 – 541.
- subject to removal, by a summary process of law, 541.

SUMMARY,

- process, to regain possession of land, 528 n., 541.
- what previous notice requisite, 528, 541.

SUNDAY,

- deed made on, good in Ohio, iii. 295.

SUN-DIAL,

- when a part of the realty, 11.

SUPPORT,

- of land, right of, incident to property in, ii. 276, 299, 330 – 333.
- how far one owner may disturb that of another, ii. 299.
- of house and structures, no right for, upon adjacent land, ii. 330 – 333.
- right may be gained by prescription, ii. 330, 332, 333.
- to gain such right, house must be properly constructed, ii. 333
- acquired for house in a block, when sold, ii. 288.
- how far rule applies, in working mines, ii. 333.

SURRENDER,

- distinct from lease, 90, 489.
- of possession, before tenant denies lessor's title, 490, 492.
- by tenant at will, determines his estate, 529.
- what it is, and its effect on rent, 474.
- (See LEASES.)
- of right of way, how far may be by parol, ii. 313.
- of easement, may be by destroying the means of enjoyment, ii. 313, 314, 316.
- of that granted by deed, requires a deed, ii. 301.

SURETY,

- when condition in mortgage made to secure, is broken, ii. 237.
- when subrogated to place of mortgagee, and to another surety, ii. 198 – 201.

SURVIVORSHIP,

- right of, in husband and wife, 314, 315.
- in joint tenants, 553, 554.
- in case of trustees, 559.
- when survivor may act, ii. 472, 484, 485.
- in estates by entirety, 577, 578.
- title by, gives no new right, 557.
- estate to two, and the survivor, creates a contingent remainder, 559.
- (See JOINT TENANTS.)
- applies, in case of joint mortgagees, ii. 136.

T.

TABLES OF CHANCES OF LIFE, 111, 281; ii. 198.

TACKING,

possession by successive occupants, to give title, ii. 305; iii. 124, 130.

wife of disseisor cannot tack her possession to his, iii. 130.

mortgages, when applied, 142.

a new loan to an existing mortgage, ii. 143.

TAIL, ESTATES, 80 - 100.

(See ESTATES.)

does not apply to personal property, 83, 502; ii. 581.

TALTARUM'S CASE,

of common recoveries, 85, ii. 651.

TAXES AND TAXATION,

assessed upon life estate, a charge upon tenant, 112.

(See OFFICE GRANT.)

power of, incident to State sovereignty, iii. 202.

how distinguished, from right of eminent domain, iii. 202.

title by sale, for, iii. 202 - 209.

(See OFFICE GRANT.)

deeds, under sales for, their requisites, iii. 206 - 209.

TENANT FOR YEARS. (See ESTATES FOR YEARS.)

TENANTS,

in capite, who were, 30.

when synonymous with owners, 70.

responsible for damages, by reason of want of repair, 470.

liable for waste, though by a stranger, 135.

when they may cut timber and improve lands, 147.

user adverse to, does not affect reversioner, ii. 303.

of land on shares, his rights, 496 - 501.

for life, 101.

(See ESTATES FOR LIFE.)

by entirety, 577.

(See ENTIRETY.)

at sufferance, 533.

(See SUFFERANCE.)

in severalty, who is such, 553.

in common, 562.

(See COMMON, &c.)

at will, 503.

(See ESTATES AT WILL.)

may remove fixtures during the term, 18.

to the *præcipe*, 52 n., 62.

(See PRÆCIPLE.)

TENDER,

of rent, where it saves forfeiture, 423 - 425.

of debt, how far necessary by mortgagor, before suit to redeem, ii. 169.

TENDER — *Continued.*

effect of, upon mortgagee's right of possession, after made by mortgagor, ii. 122, 123, 162.

TENEMENTS,

what embraced in the term, 21.

not applied to incorporeal interests, ii. 250.

TENENDUM,

what, not now used in deeds, iii. 317, 318.

TENNESSEE,

Aliens, how far hold lands, 64 ; iii. 44.

Advancement, law of, iii. 41.

Children, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 43.

posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.

Curtesy, allowed, 150.

conveyance of a greater estate no forfeiture, 169.

Contributing to redeem estate, order of, ii. 191.

Devise, what estate it carries, 75.

Dower, may be had in wild lands, 129.

may be of an equitable estate, 191.

not defeated by husband's fraudulent deed, 202, 230

out of what husband dies seised, 252.

takes precedence of creditors, 252.

damages in action for, 266.

action for, limited to twenty years, 249.

wife may elect, devise, or, 308.

Divorce, effect of, on wife's lands, 294.

Disseisin of husband, how wife affected by, 167, 169.

Descent, general law of, iii. 36.

how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689 ; iii. 14.

half-blood inherit, iii. 15.

Distress, does not lie for rent, ii. 257.

Deed, forms of, in use, ii. 420.

good, if only sealed, iii. 244.

two witnesses to, required, iii. 248.

time in which to be recorded, iii. 288.

must be recorded as against creditors, iii. 289.

a prescribed form for, by statute, iii. 312.

Damages, for breach of warranty, iii. 423.

Estates tail, changed into fees, 100.

at will, how determined, 527.

Execution, levy of on lands, ii. 29, 30.

Half-blood, inherit, iii. 15.

Heirs, not requisite to a fee, 41.

Joint tenancies, how far exist, 556.

Judgment, a lien on land, ii. 29.

Leases, what not within statute of frauds, 531.

TENNESSEE — Continued.

- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 159.
- Married women*, rights of, 323.
 - may make wills, iii. 434.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - how assigned, ii. 115.
 - order of contributing to redeem, ii. 191.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.
 - who parties to foreclosure of, ii. 231.
- Partner*, rights as survivor to land, 575.
- Partiŭion*, of common estates, 599.
- Purchase-money*, lien for exists, ii. 88, 93.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Statute* 32 Hen. VIII., ch. 28, in force, 579.
- Uses*, in conveyances of lands, ii. 418.
- Will*, estates at, how determined, 527.
- Witnesses*, what required for a will, iii. 431.
 - having a legacy does not disqualify, iii. 431.

TENURE,

- to what applied, 30.
- what are its incidents, 30.
- what is implied by the term, 34.
- all lands now held by the king, 39.
- how far it exists in the United States, 52 — 56.
- how far it exists between tenant and reversioner, 413.
- how far between landlord and tenant, 56, 413.
- how far between mortgagor and mortgagee, 413; ii. 159.
- there is none between vendor and vendee, 413.
- none between remainder-man and tenant of particular estate, ii. 514.

TERMS FOR YEARS,

- incidents and qualities of, 14, 385, 413, 421.
- trusts in, how created, ii. 451.
- can be no estates tail in, 502.
- how far within rule as to perpetuities, 386.
- when merge in the inheritance, 408.
- when one merges in another, 480, 481.
- when regarded as freeholds, 407.
- what will descend, or may be devised, 502.
- may pass by executory devise, 502.
- go to executors, &c. 410.
- attendant upon inheritance, what, 408, 409.
- satisfied outstanding, abolished, 409.

TESTAMENTARY,

- provision as jointure, 306.
- when wife may elect as to, 306, 307.

TEXAS,

- Aliens*, may hold lands, 64; iii. 44.

TEXAS — *Continued.*

- Advancement*, law of, iii. 41.
- Bargain and Sale*, in use, ii. 154.
- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
 - posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
- Devise*, what estate it carries, 75.
- Descent*, of estates, *per autre vie*, 109.
 - general law of, iii. 37.
- Dower*, of what husband died seised, 252.
- Deeds*, valid, though only sealed, iii. 244.
- Estates tail*, prohibited, 99.
- Execution*, levy of on lands, ii. 30.
- Frauds*, statute of, never adopted, ii. 465.
- Freehold*, in *futuro*, how created, ii. 550.
- Foreclosure*, suing for and for the debt, ii. 228.
- Heirs*, not requisite to a fee, 41.
- Joint tenancies*, how far exist, 556.
- Judgment*, a lien on lands, ii. 29.
- Leases*, what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 159.
- Married women*, rights and powers of, 324.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - power of sale in does not survive, ii. 74.
 - how assigned, ii. 115.
 - in what time to be recorded, ii. 137.
 - when mortgagee's rights barred by time, ii. 172.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 244.
- Partition*, made of common estate, 600.
- Power of sale* in mortgage, does not survive, ii. 74.
- Purchase-money*, how far a lien arises for, ii. 88.
- Remainders*, not affected by defeating prior estates, ii. 551.
- Trustee*, wife may be for husband, ii. 441.
- Trust*, may be declared by parol, ii. 465.
- Witnesses*, what required for a will, iii. 430.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.

THREAD OF A STREAM,

- the dividing line of lands bounding upon it, iii. 56, 354.
- how it divides new-made islands, iii. 56.
- changes, with the gradual washing of the bank, iii. 56.
- if changed by sudden convulsion, old thread remains the boundary, iii. 56.
- when new thread is formed by a new island in the stream, iii. 57, 355-357.

THELLUSON'S WILL,

- case of, ii. 679.

TIDE,

- lines, what state of, fixes what is shore, iii. 58.

TIMBER,

- what may be cut by tenant, 116.
- when cutting is waste, 127, 129.
- courts may authorize tenants to cut, 147.
- when cut, who may sue for, 411.
- property, when in the landlord or reversioner, 140.

TIME,

- of prescription, same as of limitation, ii. 304.
- from what it begins to run, ii. 304, 305.

TITLE,

- applied to lands, what it implies, ii. 58; iii. 1, 2.
- how far it grows out of possession, iii. 2, 3, 115.
- what makes *jus duplicatum*, or *droit droit*, iii. 3.
- only two ways of acquiring title, — descent, and purchase, iii. 4.
- how gained by possession and limitation, iii. 116.
- of title by act of law, and act of a party, iii. 4.
- nature of Indian title to lands, iii. 164, 168.
- is governed by the law of the place of the land, iii. 169, 216.

TITLE DEEDS,

- who has the custody of, 114.
- no clause as to, in American deeds, iii. 375.

TOLLING,

- an entry, what it was, and how effected, iii. 120.

TOUR DE L'ESCHELLE,

- what it is, 140 n.

TRADE,

- offensive, right to carry on, gained by prescription, ii. 336.

TREES, GROWING,

- when personal property, 7.
- when conveyed as such, iii. 301.
- when the subject of a fee, 10.
- when tenant may cut them, 147.
- when cut in waste, belong to the reversioner, 139.
- when to convey, requires a deed, 8-10; iii. 302.

TRESPASS, QUARE CLAUSUM,

- when one tenant may have against another, 568.
- when vendor may have against vendee in possession, 515.
- when it lies to recover *mesne* profits, 568.
- when mortgagee may have against mortgagor, ii. 128.
- and not waste, when tenant cuts excepted trees, 129.
- tenants at will may have, against strangers, 505.
- State cannot maintain, iii. 172.

TROVER,

- when it lies instead of waste for converting trees, &c. by tenant, 130.

TRUSTEE,

- is landlord to *cestui que trust* in possession, 512.

TRUSTEE — *Continued.*

- sale and purchase by, a legal fraud, ii. 77.
- extends to sales by mortgagees, ii. 77.
- violation of duty by, how far it affects a purchaser, ii. 75.
- how far mortgagee is one toward mortgagor, ii. 116.
- how far one mortgagee is so for another, ii. 136.
- to preserve contingent remainders, ii. 527.
- may have ejectment against *cestui que trust*, ii. 483.

TRUSTS,

- are uses which the statute does not execute, ii. 425–427, 437.
- history of, and how far adopted, 188; ii. 423, 424.
- what they were before stat. 27 Hen. VIII., ii. 424.
- how the stat. 27 Hen. VIII. operated to create, ii. 425.
- how the double ownership of lands grew up, ii. 425–427, 454.
- reasons for creating trusts, ii. 427.
- trustees to preserve contingent remainders, ii. 433, 478, 527, 548.
- trusts based upon a use cannot be executed on a use, ii. 426, 427.
- Tyrrel's case, its doctrine and criticism on, ii. 428, 429.
- doctrine of, makes an appointment to A, to use of B, a trust, ii. 613.

I. NATURE AND CLASSIFICATION OF,

1. upon what, rules respecting are based, ii. 424, 425.
 - embraces two estates, legal and equitable, ii. 454.
 - the legal estate in the trustee, ii. 425, 454.
 - the *cestui que trust*, has the equitable, called a trust, ii. 454.
 - why it is called an equitable estate, ii. 424, 453, 454.
 - what the sources of trusts, 427.
 - when a use limited to one, makes him feoffee to use, or trustee, ii. 433, 434.
 - are trusts, if feoffee has a duty as to the land, ii. 434, 435.
 - uses in favor of married women held to be trusts, ii. 435.
 - when it may be successively a trust and an executed use, ii. 435, 436.
 - when a devise to executors is a trust, or a power, ii. 436.
 - character and qualities of estate of *cestui que trust* derived from equity, ii. 454.
 - if a freehold estate, gives a settlement in Massachusetts, ii. 455.
 - descend, and may be devised like legal estates, ii. 456.
 - how far subject to debts, ii. 456.
 - bankruptcy of trustee does not operate upon, ii. 456.
 - same as legal estates in their duration, dissolution, and transmission, iii. 454–456.
 - how far rule in Shelley's case applies to, ii. 455, 460, 557.
 - legal estate has the qualities and incidents of those at common law, ii. 454.
 - how far trust estates subject to statute of limitations, ii. 457; iii. 144, 145.
 - no mere length of occupation by trustee bars *cestui que trust*, ii. 457.
 - twenty years' adverse possession by, may bar, ii. 458.

TRUSTS — *Continued.*

- tenant may be barred by twenty years' disseisin of trustee, ii. 458.
- trust not subject to tenure, seisin, or disseisin, ii. 458, 463.
- how far subject to escheat, ii. 459 n. ; iii. 49.
- trusts cannot be conveyed, by force of statute of uses, ii. 458.
- what in trusts answers to seisin in law, ii. 459.
- how far subject to dower and curtesy, 188 - 191 ; ii. 463.
- cestui que*, may call trustee to account for rent, &c. ii. 455.
- 2. trusts general or simple, and special, ii. 432.
- trusts created by law, implied, resulting and constructive, ii. 437.
- are not within the statute of frauds, ii. 439, 465.
- these are never executed in *cestui que trust*, ii. 437.
- implied trusts*, what are, ii. 437.
- never implied when express, ii. 437.
- arise from the *act* of the owner of the property, ii. 437.
- instances of what are, ii. 437, 438.
- purchaser has one in fee, if vendor had a fee, ii. 462.
- resulting trusts*, are of three classes, ii. 439.
- the facts that raise them may be shown by parol, ii. 439, 446.
- what are instances of such trusts, ii. 439, 440.
- a purchase by one, and deed taken to another, ii. 441, 446.
- in some States, no trust allowed to result in such case, ii. 447.
- parol evidence may control the resulting of a trust, ii. 445.
- not competent to raise, by denying consideration expressed in a deed, ii. 447.
- not raised by purchaser's declaring he held for another, ii. 447, 466.
- not raised by a purchase for a wife or child, ii. 440.
- constructive trusts*, raised by equity, as to estates acquired by fraud, accident, or mistake, ii. 448.
- such trusts are imposed *in invitum*, ii. 437.
- instances of constructive trusts, ii. 448 - 451.
- if trustee buys trust property, or with trust money, ii. 448, 449.
- in such cases, *cestui que trust* may claim the land itself, ii. 449.
- purchasing trust property of trustee, with notice, ii. 450, 485.
- one who fraudulently avoids to declare the trust in writing, ii. 451.
- if one obtain an estate upon a promise to hold for another, ii. 451.
- a surviving joint mortgagee is such trustee, for representatives of the other, ii. 448.
- creditor of trustee buying a trust estate, becomes such trustee, ii. 450.
- parol agreement to hold for another, does not create one, ii. 445, 465.
- one purchasing without notice of trust, not charged with it, ii. 450, 478.
- so one with notice, purchasing of one without, ii. 450.
- twenty years bars constructive trusts, if known to *cestui que trust*, ii. 457.
- trusts of terms* for years, how created, ii. 451.
- for long terms of years, abolished, ii. 480.
- executed and executory*, distinguished, ii. 453.

TRUSTS— *Continued.*

springing and shifting trusts, ii. 456, 457.

same rules as to perpetuities, apply to, as to legal estates, ii. 457.

II. HOW CREATED AND TRANSFERRED, ii. 425, 426, 464.

1. declarations of, construed like deeds of the legal estate, ii. 455.

how far equity revived the doctrine of uses in establishing trusts, ii. 453.

trusts may take effect, though no *cestui que trust* named in *esse*, ii. 439, 474, 481.

rule in Shelley's case, does not apply to executory trusts, ii. 455.

when fees in, may be created without "heirs," 72; ii. 459.

trustees take estates commensurate to the trust, 72; ii. 460.

if estate limited, be expressly less than a fee, equity cannot enlarge it, ii. 461.

purchaser has a trust in fee, if vendor had one, ii. 462.

when money treated as land, in respect to trusts, ii. 462.

creation of express, proved by writing or last will, ii. 465, 466.

first required by statute of frauds, ii. 465.

rule does not extend to North Carolina or Texas, ii. 465.

declaration of, need not be by deed, nor to *cestui que trust*, ii. 466.

need not be made with intent to create a trust, ii. 466.

what is a sufficient declaration of, ii. 468.

may be made before or after conveyance to trustee, ii. 468.

how far the writing may be supplied by parol, ii. 468.

need not be connected with the transfer of the land, ii. 470.

when precatory words in a will create, ii. 469.

2. owner of the legal estate only, can declare a trust, ii. 470.

trustee must accept, to become such, ii. 471.

when acceptance of trust will be presumed, ii. 471.

if trustee refuses the trust, it is as if he were dead, ii. 471.

what to be done, to make refusal effectual, ii. 471.

equity supplies trustee, if wanting, ii. 473, 485.

trustee can only be discharged by act of *cestui qui trust* or court, ii. 471.

3. trust once attached to land, can only be separated by union of legal and equitable estates, ii. 470.

trustee and *cestui que trust* may convey a complete estate, ii. 483.

owner of trust can transfer it by a simple declaration of intent, ii. 470.

grants, or assignments of trusts, must be in writing or by will, ii. 447, 466.

no particular form of writing required, ii. 466 - 469.

no conveyance by *cestui que trust* can affect the legal estate, ii. 477.

no act by trustee with notice, can affect rights of *cestui que trust*, ii. 477, 478.

if purchaser know of the trust, or the deed be voluntary, he becomes trustee, ii. 478.

TRUSTS — *Continued.*

why trustees to preserve contingent remainders, ii. 478.
 how far estate of trustee subject to descent or devise, ii. 476, 477.
 rules as to destroying contingent remainders, do not apply to trusts,
 ii. 462, 463.

when legal and equitable estates merge, ii. 478, 479.

III. PARTIES TO TRUSTS, THEIR RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

all persons, except *femes covert*, may be trustees, ii. 481.

these may be, in Iowa and Maine, ii. 481.

corporations may be trustees, and *cestui que trust*, ii. 482.

trust takes effect when *cestui que* comes in *esse*, ii. 482.

when husband held trustee of wife, ii. 479.

rights and duties of parties to trusts, depend on nature of trusts, ii.
 482, 483.

equity controls trust estates, through the persons of trustees, ii. 480.

how trustees regarded by court of law and equity, ii. 482, 483, 485.

what the character and duty of a dry trustee, ii. 482, 489.

cestui que trust, owner of estate in equity, ii. 486.

how far equity decides and enforces duty of trustees, ii. 485, 486.

how far *cestui que trust* may be suffered to occupy, or sell the estate, ii.
 488—490.

cestui que cannot defeat contingent remainder in, ii. 545.

how far trustees only can sue a real action, ii. 483, 489.

interest of trustee supports contingent remainder in *cestui que trust*,
 ii. 545.

trustee may have ejectment against *cestui que trust*, ii. 483, 489.

may make leases of the estate, ii. 595.

in some States, *cestui que trust* may have ejectment, ii. 489.

trustee bound to pay taxes and interest on incumbrances, &c. ii.
 483.

how far trustee can delegate his power, ii. 483.

trustee can take no benefit from the estate, ii. 487.

in what cases this rule applied, ii. 487, 488.

how far trustee can defeat claim of *cestui que trust*, iii. 144, 145.

trusts follow estates, when created for payment of specific debts, ii.
 490.

how far purchaser bound by the record of a trust, ii. 491.

several trustees, except public ones, make one, and must act so, ii.
 484.

how far a trust to several survives, if one die, ii. 472, 484.

a mere power does not survive, unless expressly so created, ii. 484.

does not, if given *nominatim*, with special confidence, ii. 472.

joint trustees, when like joint tenants, ii. 559, 472, 484.

when the power of trustee is coupled with an interest, ii. 472.

equity compels trustee to do his duty, ii. 474, 485.

may remove old, or appoint new, if a vacancy, ii. 475.

TRUSTS — Continued.

- how far necessary for old to release to new trustee, ii. 475, 476.
- new trustee has powers of old one, unless by special confidence, ii. 476.
- how far one liable for acts of his co-trustees, ii. 485.
- when court sets aside sales of trust property, ii. 491.
- of the compensation of trustees, ii. 491.
- trusts under the law of New York, ii. 491 – 495.

U.**UNDERGROUND,**

- water, by what rule rights to, governed, ii. 325.
- when one owner may divert from another, ii. 325 – 327.
- rights of, not affected by prescription, ii. 328.

UNDERLETTING,

- distinguished from assignment, 434, 444 – 449.
- may be for the whole term, 444.
- no privity between lessor and sub-tenant, 449.
- when sub-tenant may pay lessor, 450.
- what is a breach of condition against, 416.
- right of, incident to lessee, if not restrained by covenant, 450.

(See LEASES, IV.)

UNINTERRUPTED USER,

- necessary to gain an easement, ii. 301.
- what is such, ii. 301, 302.

UNITY,

- of interest in joint tenants, 554.
- of dominant and servient estates extinguishes easements, ii. 343, 344.

USE OF PREMISES,

- when covenants as to are implied, 472.
- no implied covenant in lease of the fitness of the premises for, 472.
- how tenant may use leased premises, 473.
- of land grant of, the same as of the land, iii. 333.

USE AND OCCUPATION,

- how far action for, lies against a purchaser, 512, 513.
- in an action for, tenant estopped to deny landlord's title, 486.

USER,

- of gaining easements by, ii. 277, 294, 296; iii. 52.
- must be of other than a natural right, ii. 298.
- must be uninterrupted and continuous, ii. 296, 301, 302.
- except of light, must be under adverse claim of right, ii. 296.
- while owner of servient estate is seised in fee, ii. 296.
- while he is not under disability, ii. 296, 303.
- with knowledge and acquiescence of such owner, ii. 300.
- if resisted by servient owner, gains no easement, ii. 300.

USES — Continued.

though adverse to tenants of a term, gains no easement even against him, ii. 303.

successive owners in privity may unite to gain an easement, ii. 305.

USES,**I. IN GENERAL,**

their definition, ii. 357, 358.

incorporeal hereditaments derived from equity, ii. 354.

never had validity in the common law, ii. 359.

their history and character, ii. 354 – 360.

answer to the *fidei commissa* of the Romans, ii. 356.

their introduction, the result of fraud and fear, ii. 357.

require two persons, feoffee and *cestui que use*, ii. 357.

are neither *jus in re* nor *jus ad rem*, ii. 358.

how far identical with trusts, ii. 358.

first case of, 18 Ed. 4, ii. 359.

(See CONTINGENT, SPRINGING, AND SHIFTING USE.)

II. USES BEFORE 27 Hen. VIII.**1. Nature and creation,**

what might be conveyed to use, ii. 361.

raised out of a seisin in feoffees to use, ii. 361.

who might be feoffees to use, ii. 361.

neither seisin nor tenure incident to, ii. 362, 368.

cestui que use had no remedy at common law, ii. 359.

remedy of *cestui que* by subpoena in chancery, ii. 359.

no act of notoriety necessary to create, ii. 362.

when it required a deed to raise, ii. 362.

declaration of, good though by parol, ii. 365.

most usual mode of creating, by feoffment, ii. 366.

might be raised without affecting the legal estate, ii. 366, 367.

might be raised in favor of one not party to deed, ii. 367.

feoffee, the legal owner of the estate, ii. 369.

might convey, or be disseised of, or wife have dower in, ii. 370.

his heir or purchaser with notice, took subject to the use, ii. 370.

privity of estate and confidence between feoffee and *cestui que use*, requisite, ii. 370.

what is meant by privity of estate, ii. 370, 371.

if in possession, *cestui que use* tenant at will to trustee, ii. 366.

2. Estates in uses, and how conveyed,

how far chancery adopted the rules of the common law, ii. 365.

uses descendible like land, ii. 365.

might be inheritable without words of inheritance, ii. 365.

cestui que use could convey the use, not the land, ii. 365, 366.

uses alienable by writing or parol, ii. 366.

might be transferred in fee, in tail, for life or years, ii. 367.

cestui que use could not be disseised, ii. 368, 369.

USES — *Continued.*

- no dower or curtesy in a use, ii. 369.
- not subject to burdens of tenure, or liable for debts, ii. 369.
- subject by statute to forfeiture for treason, ii. 369.
- how devises were affected by means of, 69 ; ii. 365.
- 3. *Resulting uses,*
 - in what cases equity raised such, ii. 363.
 - difference in this respect between equity and common law, ii. 363.
 - no use results in favor of a father in purchase for a child, ii. 363.
 - none resulted, if expressly declared, or a consideration existed, ii. 363, 364.
 - considerations sufficient to raise uses, ii. 364.
 - how far fraudulent holders of estates held trustees, ii. 367.
- 4. *How uses applied in conveyances,*
 - how uses prevented from resulting, in modern deeds, ii. 365.
 - how they operate in bargain and sale, and covenant to stand seised, ii. 365.
 - contingent remainders might be created without a prior estate, ii. 368.
 - the law changed after the statute of uses, ii. 368.
 - how springing and shifting uses and powers were created, ii. 367, 368.
 - freeholds in *futuro*, might be created by, ii. 368.
 - why no violence to the feudal doctrine of disseisin by these, ii. 368.
 - successive interests made to be held in joint tenancy, iii. 368.
 - husband might create in favor of wife, ii. 368.
- 5. *acts before 27 Henry VIII., intended to defeat uses,* ii. 371.

III. USES UNDER THE STAT. 27 HENRY VIII.

- 1. *In general,* 297, 298.
 - purposes of the act, ii. 372.
 - substance and effect of it, ii. 374, 375.
 - date and time of taking effect of, ii. 373.
 - extends to property corporeal and incorporeal, ii. 377.
 - courts gave it a strict construction, ii. 375.
 - its effect upon the transfer of estates, ii. 373, 374.
 - it made no distinction between active and passive trusts, ii. 376.
 - it retained the doctrine of a seisin and a use, ii. 375.
 - "executed," when use united with seisin, ii. 376.
 - what words sufficient to declare uses, ii. 380.
- 2. *Of the execution of uses,*
 - what necessary to such execution, ii. 376.
 - first*, a person who may be seised, ii. 376.
 - grantor must be seised in possession, remainder, or reversion, ii. 376.
 - seisin and use must pass simultaneously, ii. 378.
 - feoffee must have a freehold, ii. 378.
 - the use can be of no greater estate than that of feoffee, ii. 378.
 - one use cannot be united to another, ii. 378.
 - upon a use not allowed, ii. 378, 379.

USES — *Continued.*

- importance of this rule in creating trusts, ii. 378.
- second, a cestui que use in esse*, ii. 379.
- estate cannot take effect till one *in esse*, ii. 379.
- the use remains in grantor till then, ii. 379.
- any person may be a *cestui que use*, ii. 379.
- estates in, limited by same words as of lands, ii. 379, 385.
- what words sufficient to create a use, ii. 380.
- where the feoffee named and *cestui que use* may be the same, ii. 380
- the estate, in such case, one at common law, ii. 378.
- third, a use in esse*, ii. 383.
- the use will be executed when it comes *in esse*, ii. 383.
- use defeated, if seisin in feoffees lost before coming *in esse*, ii. 383.
- union of these three makes a complete legal estate, ii. 384, 390.
- feoffee's fee does not merge his estate for years, ii. 384.
- "after such quality, manner, &c.," the key to construe the statute, ii. 385.
- 3. *Capacity of uses in respect to estates*,
 - what could be done by them which could not be at common law, ii. 385, 405, 406.
 - freehold created to commence *in futuro*, ii. 386.
 - how far this may be done by bargain and sale, ii. 386, 387, 422.
 - grantor might reserve a power of revocation and appointment, ii. 388.
 - of the doctrine of seisin and *scintilla juris*, ii. 388, 389.
 - when a future use is contingent and when a power, ii. 389.
 - rule as to vesting if contingent, as in remainders, ii. 390.
- 4. *Uses applied to conveyancing*, 106, 107.
 - modes of conveyance that grow out of the statute, ii. 390 – 394.
 - estate of feoffee has not the incidents of an estate at law, ii. 390.
 - limits that of the *cestui que use*, ii. 391.
 - what conveyance good by uses, and not by common law, ii. 381.
 - husband may convey to wife by means of this, ii. 381.
 - how a contingent remainder by way of use, is created and sustained, ii. 381 – 383.
 - feoffment to use, the operation of, ii. 391.
 - fine with deed to lead to uses, ii. 391.
 - bargain and sale, in what it consists, ii. 392.
 - what requisite to give it validity, ii. 392 – 394.
 - covenant to stand seised, what requisite to, ii. 392, 393.
 - effect of uses upon possession by lessee, 390.
 - consideration requisite to bargain and sale, covenant to stand, &c. ii. 393.
 - lease and release, character and history of, ii. 394, 395.
 - now abolished, and *grant* substituted in England, ii. 394.
 - has been in use in United States, ii. 395.
 - declaration of uses or trusts must be in writing, ii. 395, 396.

USES — *Continued.*

- how estates like remainders after a fee, created by, ii. 23.
- 5. *Resulting uses*,
 - resulting and implied trusts excepted from statute of frauds, ii. 396.
 - in what cases a use results, ii. 396 – 399.
 - to whom, and in what form uses result, ii. 399.
 - effect of a use resulting to one's own heirs, ii. 399.
 - when the resulting of a use negatived by parol, ii. 400, 401.
 - consideration received, or use declared, prevents a use resulting, ii. 401, 406.
 - of a use for years, resulting to a grantor in fee, ii. 402.
 - what consideration of a deed is, may be proved by parol, ii. 406.
- 6. *Uses created by will*,
 - uses by will governed by the rules of deeds, ii. 402.
 - when devise to one, to the use of another, creates a legal estate in the devisee, ii. 402.
 - trusts created by devises, do not result, ii. 403.
 - exception, if the use fails, ii. 403.
- 7. *Destroying or suspending uses*,
 - contingent, but not executed uses, may be destroyed or suspended, ii. 404.
 - instances of these, ii. 404.
 - effect of revoking uses, ii. 405.
 - from whose seisin the use served that executes it, ii. 405.
 - how springing and shifting uses and powers are applied in family settlements, ii. 406.
- 8. *Conveyances in United States*,
 - uses, how applied in deeds in the States, ii. 407 – 422.
 - in what States uses not adopted, ii. 408.
 - in what States a statute substitute, ii. 408.
 - forms of conveyance in different States, ii. 408 – 421.
 - uses applied when form of deed defective, ii. 408 – 420.
 - form of deeds, and how far uses applied in Alabama, ii. 420.
 - Connecticut, ii. 411.
 - Georgia, ii. 411.
 - Indiana, ii. 411.
 - Iowa, ii. 418.
 - Maine, ii. 410.
 - Maryland, ii. 412, 413.
 - Massachusetts, ii. 408 – 410.
 - New Hampshire, ii. 413.
 - New Jersey, ii. 416.
 - New York, ii. 419.
 - North Carolina, ii. 412.
 - Ohio, ii. 417.
 - Pennsylvania, ii. 414 – 416.

USES — *Continued.*

South Carolina, ii. 414.

Tennessee, ii. 418.

Texas, ii. 420.

Vermont, ii. 417.

Virginia, ii. 412.

what States adopt bargain and sale, ii. 420.

what adopt deeds of feoffment, ii. 420.

in what, a release and quitclaim sufficient, ii. 420.

in what, no deed is required, ii. 420.

in what, forms prescribed by statute, ii. 420.

in what, no form of deed prescribed, ii. 421.

how far covenant to stand seised for a valuable consideration good, ii. 421.

relation of an illegitimate child, not a good consideration, ii. 422.

IV. CONTINGENT USE,

what is, ii. 564.

requires a particular estate to support, ii. 565.

how differs from springing and executory devises, ii. 565.

never construed such, if it can be as a remainder, ii. 565, 573, 602.

governed by same rules as contingent remainders, ii. 381, 382, 565, 568.

if a use is to wait till a prior estate expires, it is a remainder, ii. 573.

must have a freehold to support a freehold remainder, ii. 565, 568.

must have a seisin, to be executed in the use, when it vests, ii. 565.

in whom such seisin is, ii. 566.

of the doctrine of *scintilla juris*, ii. 567, 568.

the prior estate may be a resulting one, ii. 569.

if limited to several, may take effect successively, ii. 569.

defeated by destroying prior estate, ii. 582, 583.

loss of seisin not enough, while there is a right of entry, ii. 583.

how far one must gain actual seisin, to have such use executed, ii. 583, 584.

Lord Coke's case, its nature and history, ii. 584 – 587.

if prior estate is one in tail, the holder may defeat the use by barring it, ii. 587.

such uses not within the rules of perpetuity, ii. 587.

V. SPRINGING USE,

what it is, ii. 367, 570.

the event that raises it, certain or uncertain, ii. 571.

no particular estate necessary to support it, ii. 571.

Mutton's case the first to support it, ii. 571.

the doctrine of creating a freehold *in futuro*, by it, 571, 572.

how far a springing, is a shifting one, ii. 572.

must be limited at once, independent of any preceding estate, ii. 572.

difference between, and a contingent use, ii. 572.

like executory devises, except created by deed, ii. 572, 573.

USES — Continued.

a use to wait till expiration of prior estate, is a remainder, ii. 573.
 springing use not affected by destruction of prior estate, ii. 582, 675.
 within what time must take effect to be valid, ii. 588, 654, 659, 675.
 limitation never construed as, if it can be as a contingent remainder,
 ii. 602.

VI. SHIFTING USE,

or secondary, defined, ii. 367, 574.
 doctrine of limiting a fee after a fee, sustained by it, ii. 22 – 24, 576.
 the first case sustaining it, ii. 575.
 how far applied in modern settlements, ii. 575, 576.
 requires a seisin in some one, other than *cestui que use*, ii. 571, 572.
 in whom such seisin is, ii. 576.
 difference between, and springing use, ii. 576.
 of a future use, the preceding estate not supporting^d a remainder, ii.
 577.
 a conditional limitation, and how applied, ii. 578 – 580.
 shifting use not affected by destroying prior estate, ii. 582, 675.
 within what time must take effect, to be valid, ii. 24, 588, 655, 659,
 675.
 if limited after an estate tail, is not within the rules as to perpetuity,
 ii. 387.
 future uses may be devised or assigned, and will descend, ii. 582.
 how far alienable, ii. 582.
 tenant of prior estate enjoined from waste, ii. 582.
 how far terms subject to springing uses, &c. ii. 581, 675.
 same rules applied to future uses in chattels as in freehold interest, ii.
 580.
 term limited to one and heirs of body, an absolute gift, ii. 581.

USUFRUCTUS,

by the Roman law, defined, ii. 356.

USURY,

no defence to a mortgage by the purchaser of the equity, ii. 565.

V.**VERMONT,**

Attachment, on writ, a lien, ii. 29.
Alienage, no law as to, 64.
Adoption, law of, iii. 42.
Advancement, law of, iii. 40.
Bargain and sale, in use, ii. 420.
Curtesy, allowed, 150.
 how forfeited, 168.
Covenant, how far mortgagee liable on, 456.
Contributing, order of, to redeem mortgages, ii. 191.

VERMONT — *Continued.*

- Children*, illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.
 - posthumous, rights of, iii. 44.
 - Collector's deed*, to be recorded, iii. 208.
 - Charitable uses*, in force, iii. 439.
 - Dower*, barred by husband's deed, 203, 230.
 - of what husband died seised, 252.
 - set out by judge of probate, 260, 277.
 - Divorce*, effect of on wife's lands, 292.
 - Descent*, general laws of, iii. 38.
 - Deeds*, two witnesses to required, iii. 248.
 - wife must join husband in, iii. 230.
 - recording of, what is, iii. 285.
 - Disseisee*, cannot convey land, iii. 294.
 - Damages*, for breach of warranty, iii. 423.
 - recoverable for waste done, 144.
 - Estates tail*, how changed, 100.
 - Execution*, levy of, on lands, ii. 30.
 - Ejectment*, lies upon mortgages, ii. 101.
 - Foreclosure*, who parties to suit for, ii. 231.
 - Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far in use, 556.
 - Leases*, parol, create estates at will, 395, 531.
 - what must be by deed, 394.
 - actions on covenants in, transitory, 455.
 - Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 160.
 - Mortgagee*, may have waste against mortgagor, ii. 128.
 - Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - forfeiture advances, ii. 144, 146.
 - order of contribution to redeem, ii. 191.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 243.
 - Mortgagor*, holds till condition broken, ii. 101, 109.
 - Married women*, rights and powers of, 324.
 - may make wills, iii. 434.
 - Notice*, required to determine estates at will, 527.
 - Partition*, how made of common lands, 593.
 - of what none can be made, 585.
 - Purchase-money*, a lien exists for, ii. 87, 93.
 - Perpetuity*, rules as to, in force, ii. 680.
 - Uses*, how applied in conveyances, ii. 417, 420.
 - Wills*, pass after-acquired estates, iii. 432.
 - what witnesses required, iii. 430.
 - require seals, iii. 431.
 - Widow's*, quarantine, what is, 256.
- VILLEINAGE,
- tenure by, in what it consisted, 38.

VILLEINAGE — *Continued.*

origin of copyholds, 39.

villein socage, what it was, 38.

VIEW,

no action lies, for obstructing, ii. 319.

VIRGINIA,

Aliens, how far hold real estate, 64 ; iii. 44.

Advancement, law of, iii. 41.

Bargain and Sale, in use, ii. 420.

Boundary, proved by hearsay, iii. 365.

Cession, by State to U. S., of military tract, effect of, iii. 170.

Curtesy, recognized, 150, 152.

Co-tenants, liable to each other, 558.

Common, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.

Contributing to redeem, order of, ii. 191.

Children, posthumous, take as if alive, ii. 552 ; iii. 44.

illegitimate, how far heirs, iii. 42.

of marriages annulled, legitimate, iii. 44.

Charitable uses, are like other devises, iii. 438.

Distress, lies for rent, ii. 256.

Descent, general laws of, iii. 38.

of lands, to husband and wife, 580.

how far *seisina facit stipitem*, ii. 689 ; iii. 14.

Deed, what constitutes recording, iii. 285.

in what time must be recorded, iii. 288.

when recorded, used in evidence, iii. 288.

if recorded, has precedence of creditors, iii. 289.

Damages, rule of for breach of warranty, iii. 423.

what recovered in action of dower, 265.

Devise, what estate it carries, 75.

Dower, in equitable estates, 191.

is barred by elopement, 228, 294.

in all husband was seised of, 251.

by what court set out, 260.

what damages in action for, 265.

what value in aliened estates, 273.

Entails, once adopted by, 98.

Estates tail, abolished, 99.

Elegit, form of writ of, ii. 27.

Feudal tenures, abolished in, 54.

Fines and recoveries, never in use, 280.

Freeholds, granted in *futuro*, ii. 550.

Husband and wife, descent of lands to, 580.

Heirs, not requisite to a fee, 41.

Judgments, constitute liens on land, ii. 29.

Joint tenancies, how far allowed, 556.

VIRGINIA — Continued.

- Land warrants*, pass to heirs, iii. 182.
- Leases*, what must be by deed, 394.
 - what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Limitation*, of real actions, iii. 160.
- Married woman*, joins in a deed with husband, iii. 230.
 - must be privately examined in making deeds, iii. 230.
 - rights and powers of, 324.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 55.
 - contributing to redeem, order of, ii. 191.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 242.
- Mortgagee*, may charge for services, ii. 217.
- Partition*, of estates, how made, 598.
- Partners*, rights of to lands, do not survive, 575.
- Purchase-money*, lien for exists, ii. 88, 93.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Remainder*, not affected by loss of prior estate, ii. 551.
- Rent*, recognized as a hereditament, ii. 256.
- Uses*, as applied in conveyances, ii. 412.
- Wills*, what witnesses to required, iii. 481.
 - pass after-acquired estates, iii. 482.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 255.
- Waste*, what action lies for, 143, 591.

VOCONIAN LAW,

- as to heirs, what was, ii. 355.

VOID AND VOIDABLE,

- applied to leases, what are, 401, 402.
- how and when ratified, 402.
- who may disaffirm, if voidable, 402, 403.
- within what time it must be done, 403.
- applied to deeds, generally voidable only, iii. 225.
- obtained by duress, voidable, iii. 234.

VOLUNTARY,

- conveyances, what are, and effect of, iii. 297, 298.

VOUCHING IN,

- warrantor to defend title, 86, 589, 590; iii. 402.
- part of the farce of common recovery, 86.

VASSAL,

- who was such, 30.

VENDEE,

- of land, how far liable for occupation, 312, 313.
- his lien, for advances towards purchase-money, ii. 93.

VENDOR,

- of land, how far liable after occupation, 515.
- his lien on land for purchase-money, ii. 86, 93.

VENTRE SA MERE,

- child in, regarded as alive, ii. 545.

VESTED,

- interest in lands, what is, 23.
- estates, when in interest, and when in possession, iii. 507, 664, 665.
- interest, if future, liable to be divested, ii. 665, 666.
- when in right, though not in possession, ii. 665.
- remainder, what is, ii. 507.

VILLEINS,

- their character and rights, 38.
- service, in what it consisted, 38.
- how extensively it prevailed in England, 38.

W.**WARDSHIP,**

- under feudal law, what, 35, 36.

WARRANTY OF FITNESS FOR USE,

- none implied in a lease, 472, 473.

WARRANTY,

- in what it consisted, 31.
- of vouching in warrantor, 86, 590.
- how far tenants, after partition, are to deraign it, 589.
- what it was by feudal law, iii. 398.
- of covenants of, iii. 396 - 408.
- lineal and collateral, what is, iii. 408 - 411.
- when it works a rebutter, iii. 408.
- what is implied in deeds, iii. 411, 412.

(See COVENANT.)

WASTE,

(See ESTATES FOR LIFE.)

- what is, 116, 117, 125, 126.
- depends on usage of the country, 118, 127, 131.
- who liable for, 125, 557.
- distinction between voluntary and permissive, 126.
- remedy for, 126, 136, 137.
- action for, depends on privity of estate, 137, 138.
- regulated by statute in the United States, 138.
- action of waste gone into disuse, 141.
- by felling timber, 127 - 129.
- by digging clay and soil, 130.
- by opening and working mines, 130.
- digging for salt wells, 131.
- in managing lands, 131, 132.
- when in buildings, 132, 133.
- when for damage by fire, 136.
- not for acts of God, or the law, 135.
- tenant liable for, though done by a stranger, 135.

WASTE—Continued.

- rules as to estates "without impeachment of," &c. 140.
- one joint tenant may have it against another, 557.
- one tenant in common may have against another, 569.
- tenant at will not liable for, 508.
- law of, in the different States, 142–144.
- usual remedy for, a process in equity, 145.
- in what cases a bill in equity for, lies, 146.
- how far widow liable for, as to dower lands, 291.
- remedy for, upon land of wife, 318.
- by mortgagee against tenant, ii. 127, 128.
- mortgagee, how far liable for, 128.
- how mortgagee may stay it by mortgagor, 129.

WATERCOURSE,

- when owner of, must keep it in repair, ii. 325.
- what he may do for the purpose, ii. 325.

WATER POWER,

- how partition of, made, ii. 586.
- effect of first occupation of, ii. 322.
- when the law justifies flowing lands to create, ii. 322.
- prescriptive right to maintain, ii. 323.
- what is intended by a grant of, and how to be used, iii. 301.
- reservation of, in a deed, what it embraces, iii. 279.

WATER,

- rights of easement in, ii. 275.
- no property in, except its use, ii. 319.
- enjoyment of the natural flow gives no easement, ii. 298.
- use of natural stream an incident of property, ii. 320.
- each riparian owner has a right to the reasonable use of a stream, ii. 320.
- he may use it for irrigation, ii. 320, 321.
- (See IRRIGATION.)
- is liable to others for excessive use of, ii. 320.
- mill-owner has a right to discharge into the stream, ii. 324.
- right to discharge on another's land may be acquired, ii. 324.
- underground, not governed by the same rules as other, ii. 325.
- one land-owner may divert it from another, ii. 325.
- rights of, in artificial streams, ii. 323.
- flowing from a mine may be stopped by the owner, ii. 329.
- owner of house may stop its flow from the eaves, ii. 329, 330.

WAY,

- right of, what it is, ii. 275.
- can only be granted by deed, iii. 301.
- different kinds of, ii. 296, 307.
- reference to one in a deed, how far a covenant, iii. 412.
- when user determines, of which of these it is, ii. 296.

WAY — *Continued.*

- may be fixed by terms of grant, ii. 307, 308, 310.
- cannot be granted separate from the land, ii. 280.
- granted for one purpose or one parcel, cannot be used for another, ii. 280, 307, 308.
- when one between two *termini* may be used over part of it, ii. 308.
- how far the right passes with several parts of the estate, ii. 280.
- how ways may be used, under grants, ii. 310.
- when a right of, is reserved by implication, ii. 282.
- when one has a way of necessity, ii. 282, 306.
- such way always arises by grant, ii. 306.
- right ceases with the necessity, ii. 282.
- land-owner may designate it, ii. 306.
- if he refuses, owner of way may, ii. 306.
- owner of, cannot change its use to the injury of the servient estate, ii. 308.
- grantee cannot change its course if fixed, ii. 309.
- when owner of land may change the course of the way, ii. 310.
- may be lost by non-user, ii. 312.
- if gained by express grant, cannot be, ii. 312.
- non-user may be explained, ii. 312.
- cannot be abandoned by parol, ii. 313.
- how far one may be substituted by parol, ii. 313.
- case of *Pope v. Devereaux*, ii. 313, n.
- misusing the right does not destroy it, ii. 310.
- when changing purposes of does, ii. 310.
- dominant estate bound to repair, ii. 311.
- what it may do for this purpose, ii. 311.
- if out of repair, when owner may go on adjacent land, ii. 311.
- how far parol evidence competent to show existing ways, ii. 311.

WAIVER OF NOTICE,

- by tenant at will, 524.
- of forfeiture*, by accepting rent, 529.

WELL,

- what passes under grant of, iii. 336.

WHARF,

- what embraced in a prescriptive right to, ii. 337.
- what passes by grant of, iii. 336.

WIFE'S SEPARATE ESTATE, 275.

(See HUSBAND AND WIFE, AND MARRIED WOMEN.)

WILD LANDS,

- devise of, passes a fee, 74.
- dower, whether or not allowed in, 129, 195.

WILLS,

- when a declaration of a use, ii. 365.
- estates at, 503.

(See ESTATES, 4.)

WILLS — Continued.

- in use by the Saxons, iii. 246.
- why disallowed under the Normans, iii. 426.
- how evaded by means of uses, iii. 426.
- requisites of, under statute of wills, iii. 427.
- requisites of, under statute of frauds, iii. 428.
- reasons of passing that statute, iii. 427.
- form of executing now in England, iii. 428.
- ambulatory, while testator lives, iii. 429.
- number of witnesses required, iii. 430, 431.
- their office and duty, iii. 429.
- what is presence as to witnesses, iii. 429, 430.
- to what time their competency relates, iii. 430.
- how far *lex rei sitæ* governs the form of, iii. 430.
- effect of probate of, iii. 431.
- the time at which wills speak, iii. 432.
- what are the requisite qualifications of a testator, iii. 433.
- wills of *femes covert*, iii. 433, 434.
- what is a "sound and disposing mind," iii. 434, 435.
- effect of monomania upon, iii. 435.
- rules as to construing, iii. 446.
- when terms of a will changed; "or" for "and," &c. iii. 447.
- how made inoperative in life of testator, iii. 455.
- how far terms of, fixed by referring to other papers, iii. 456.
- what will be a revocation of, iii. 457, 458.
- how far marriage a revocation, iii. 458.
- how posthumous children affected by, iii. 459.
- when a new revokes a former one, iii. 459.
- how revived when once revoked, iii. 460.
- effect of a codicil upon an existing will, iii. 460.
- effect of republication of, iii. 460.
- may be signed by testator's mark, iii. 428.
- may be executed on Sunday, iii. 428.
- two may make mutual wills, iii. 428.
- witnesses may attest by mark, iii. 429.
- witness cannot attest till after testator has signed, iii. 429.

WINDOW BLINDS,

- a part of realty, 10; iii. 338.

WISCONSIN,

- Allodial*, ownership of lands, 54.
- Alienage*, no disability, 64.
- Advancement*, law of, iii. 40.
- Accumulation*, limitations of, iii. 683.
- Conveyance*, works no forfeiture, 107.
- Curtesy*, allowed, 150.
- Covenants*, none implied in deeds, iii. 416.

WISCONSIN — *Continued.*

- Co-tenants*, liable in damages to each other, 558.
- Common*, tenants in, liable for waste, 591.
- Contingent*, future estate how created, ii. 551.
- Contingency*, how far remoteness affects estates, ii. 551.
- Children*, posthumous, rights of, ii. 552; iii. 44.
- Deed*, no form of prescribed, ii. 421.
- Descent*, general law of, iii. 39.
 - of estates *per autre vie*, 109.
- Dower*, of all husbands was seised of, 251.
 - in exchanged estates, how ascertained, 185.
- Damages*, rule of for breach of warranty, iii. 423.
- Estates Tail*, changed to fees, 100.
- Exchanges* of lands, recognized, 185.
- Estate*, abridging a prior one may be good, ii. 551.
 - for life, good after estate for years, ii. 550.
 - expectant, descend and are alienable, ii. 552.
- Freehold*, may be created *in futuro*, ii. 550.
- Foreclosure*, who parties to, ii. 231, 233.
- Joint*, estates, held to be in common, 555.
 - tenancies, how far exist, 556.
- Leases*, how signed by agents, 395.
 - what not within statute of frauds, 395, 531.
- Limitation*, upon "failure of issue," ii. 682.
 - of real actions, iii. 157.
- Married Women*, rights and powers of, 324.
 - may make will, iii. 433.
- Mortgages*, proved by parol, ii. 54.
 - how foreclosed, ii. 221, 241.
 - who executes power of sale under, ii. 73.
- Mortgagor*, holds possession till condition broken, ii. 109.
- Mortgagee*, may bid at sale of estate, ii. 77.
- Perpetuity*, rule of, ii. 682.
- Power of sale*, in mortgage, who executes, ii. 73.
- Partition*, how made of estates, 595.
- Remainder*, not affected by loss of prior estate, ii. 556.
- Rule in Shelley's case*, abolished, ii. 563.
- Scroll*, answers to a seal, iii. 247.
- Waste*, form of action for, 138, 143, 144.
- Widow's quarantine*, what is, 256.
- Wills*, what witnesses required for, iii. 431.
 - married women may make, iii. 433.

WITNESSES,

- to deeds, how many required, iii. 247, 248.
- to wills, how many required, iii. 430, 431.
- their office and duty, iii. 429.

WITNESSES — Continued.

what is presence as to, iii. 429, 430.

to what time competency of, refers, iii. 430.

effect of a legacy, to a witness to a will, iii. 431.

WOOD,

what a tenant may cut, 115, 116, 127, 129.

Y.**YEAR TO YEAR,**

tenants from, 519.

(See **ESTATES**, 7.)

"YIELDING AND PAYING,"

how far a condition, 415.

how far a covenant, 429.



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